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NOTES OF THE WEEK

IT has been a curiously patchy and uneven week, signs of improvement and returning confidence in one direction being offset by lack of support or success in others. It would be difficult to say whether the actual balance on the whole is favourable or not; probably the truth is that things tend generally to improve, but that the adverse factors are more visible, and more immediately in evidence, than the signs of better times ahead.

Taxation.

The two adverse factors are the signs of stagnation on the debts and reparations question, and the heavy drain of income-tax. The main industry of this country at the moment, and for some weeks ahead, is the payment of taxes; and although the taxpayer appears to be responding as cheerfully as possible to the pressure of the authorities, the fact remains that it leaves little money for ordinary commercial enterprise.

At the moment, of course, there is nothing to be done except pay up and look pleasant. But once we have discharged our debt for the extravagance of the late Government, the national house will have to be put in order. The country simply cannot survive on the assumption that for three months out of every twelve the individual hands his earnings over to the State.

As to the interminable controversy over debts and reparations, there is little difference of opinion in this country; the whole nation wishes them cut down to the barest minimum, as the only practical alternative to a complete cleaning of the slate. But this appears impossible, for the simple reason that opinion in France and

America will not yet tolerate any such situation. They will come to that in the end, but the time is not yet.

To dissipate the leading members of this Cabinet in various Swiss resorts next month may be the shrewd strategy of a modern MacDonald, conscious of the frequent success of this manoeuvre in the history of the Highland clans. But it is not business, let alone national government. Our foreign policy hereafter turns on what Imperial policies permit. And to that end Ottawa not Geneva is the key.

As to Reparations, let us be frank. Two great City houses and three banks are up to the hilt in frozen private indebtedness to Germany. These interests clamour for abandonment of the prior claim by France (and America through our debt to her) of "political" debts. The question for British Industry to answer is this. If our politicians set Germany on her legs again to please the City, who ultimately pays?

The Means Test.

Some survivors of the Socialist Party, heedless of the way the dole-vote went last October, have evidently learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. A battle royal on the Government's handling of transitional benefit is therefore loudly heralded for the new session. But the really significant omen in three months' experience of the new régime is the impressive number of old hands at the Labour Exchanges who already, and obviously for sufficient reasons, refuse to submit their private circumstances to official review, and prefer to drop off the register altogether.

Shrinking Death Duties.

The nine months' returns of the Exchequer showed in the miserably low yield of estate duties to date the ravages of last year's Socialism and the general investment slump in stock market quotations and in real values. Estate duties have always formed a close tally with the national prosperity indices. Ever since Sir William Harcourt introduced them in 1894, values have increased almost every year, but the tide has now definitely turned the other way.

Hunting.

A sign of the times, or rather the trail of the tax gatherer, is seen in the drop in numbers at any meet of hounds, in the crack Shires and popular two-day a week privately owned pack alike. Eight fashionable packs are advertising for new Masters for 1932-33. Hunting is estimated to mean a million of money a year spent in the countryside. I should doubt if half that amount will be available next year. Hunting, both as a sport and an industry, is in for a lean period until prosperity returns, and I should think those new Masters will not be easily found.

Ireland.

Although the actual date of polling has not yet been settled, the election campaign in the Irish Free State has commenced, and the probable outcome is as baffling as it was here in the early days of last October. The arguments of both sides are obviously being weighed with care, but the electors are not giving much indication of the way in which they will vote. The actual decision, of course, rests with the farmers, and they are likely to plump for Mr. Cosgrave.

The Government has for the first time the support of the old Nationalists, led by Captain Redmond, but it has yet to be seen what this is worth in actual votes outside the county of Waterford. Mr. Cosgrave's chief asset, however, is the absence of any policy worth the name on the part of Mr. De Valera, for the abolition of the Oath will not enable the Irish farmer to get a higher price for his goods.

Spain.

The situation in Spain is going from bad to worse, and the Government is clearly unable to control it. Not a day goes by without an outbreak of violence in some part of the Peninsula, and the hands of the police are so tied by the new regulations that their prestige has completely disappeared. Indeed, the extremists are conducting a vigorous agitation against that most admirable of bodies, the *Guardia Civil*, which alone stands between Spain and anarchy, and there are rumours that it is to be abolished.

The plain fact is that the state of affairs is the same as it was in Russia in the days of Kerensky, when the Government was the mere tool of the revolutionaries. In Andalusia alone there are eighty thousand avowed Communists, while everywhere the Socialists are losing their control over organized labour. A Communist rising on a national scale is a mere question of time, probably of a very short time, and it may well be that before many months are past a Bolshevik Spain will be added to the other complications of Europe.

In that event this country might well be involved. Quite apart from the improbability of France and Italy regarding a Red Spain with equanimity, we are bound by treaty to send troops to defend Portugal if she is invaded, which would be more than likely if there were a military dictatorship at Lisbon and a Soviet government

at Madrid. In these circumstances one can only hope that the Spaniards will realize the danger before it is too late, and their country has once again become the battleground of Europe.

The Dean and the Cosmos.

There was considerable point in Dean Inge's criticism of modern cosmic theories in his Warburton Lecture last week; and he might even have strengthened the case he made against the astronomers by running through a list of the various conflicting hypotheses they have put up during the past few years. It has been a period of extraordinarily rapid discovery, but observation has led to far too many novel cosmic theories, each and all of which have had to be scrapped one by one.

Less than ten years ago, for example, we were authoritatively informed that the cosmos could only be a certain size, because the immutable laws of mathematics forbade anything else; there was just so much matter lying about in space, and its distribution could not be very different from what it was. Unluckily for this assumption, new island universes were discovered by the telescope, which showed that matter existed in fact where theory disallowed it; and not only did it exist, but it was receding at great speed, so that the cosmos was getting larger (and apparently thinner) every day.

There followed the present fashionable theory that the cosmos is in process of disintegration, and even of annihilation. This belief happens to fit in very well with current pessimism as to the disintegration of European civilisation and culture and capital; but our local affairs are too insignificant to be any guide to the destiny of the cosmos, and the parallel is purely delusive and accidental.

When the actual evidence for the new astronomical theory is examined—especially when the failure of previous but still recent theories is borne in mind—it will be seen to be no more conclusive or securely established than its predecessors. If new matter is in process of creation or evolution, as appears to be the case, it rather looks as though the cosmos were keeping pace with itself, so to speak. The purpose of the whole thing remains a mystery, but it must frankly be recognised that we have not yet enough facts at our disposal to explain it.

Bishop Gore

As scholar, as preacher, and as a spiritual force far beyond the Church of England, the late Bishop Gore will not easily be forgotten. His books, and more particularly his post-war "Reconstruction of Belief," were read by clergymen, and even by laymen, all over the world; and until recently the announcement that he was to preach at a London Church ensured a full congregation.

It was sometimes complained that he began life as a Modernist and ended it as an Anglo-Catholic; in other words that he applied critical methods to the Old Testament but not to the New. There was, I think, some point in this objection, but it must be remembered that Old Testament criticism was far advanced in his youth, and that for years in his middle age he was the active administrator of a diocese.

I doubt if he ever quite caught up again with the critical thought of the period after he retired from administrative work, but undoubtedly his spiritual influence grew during the last years of his life. He was a man of singular charm and sweetness, and even in controversy he kept the respect and even sometimes gained the affection of his antagonists.

"Come to Britain."

I need hardly say that the "Back to Britain" movement has my blessing, and since the cash value of the French tourist trade has been estimated at approximately a hundred millions in a normal year, even a relatively small diversion of overseas visitors would be welcome. But it is useless to shut one's eyes to the fact that the lower cost of an English holiday, due to our going off the gold standard, is not in itself an all-sufficient inducement. British holiday makers have in recent years gone to the Continent by the hundred thousand partly on account of cheapness and in part because of the absence of vexatious restrictions.

So long as the foreign visitor to Brighton cannot buy a glass of beer after 10 p.m., in the height of summer, while other seaside resorts observe Sunday on the strictest Sabbatarian lines, the increased purchasing power of foreign currencies, as is admitted by the originator of the "Back to Britain" campaign, cannot make the movement fully successful. Our hotel keepers must also lower their prices. It is true that the exchange value of a dollar is to-day higher in England than in France, but even on that basis the charges of the average British seaside hotel are still higher than the French.

At inland centres, such as cathedral cities, the difference is still more marked, and unfortunately high tariffs do not necessarily mean good service. Lower prices, a more varied cuisine, and a greater use of fresh English fruit and vegetables in place of foreign stuff out of a can, are all necessary if Britain is to become the tourists' Mecca commensurate with her scenic beauties and historic associations.

Luxury or Necessity?

It is curious to notice the combination of business enterprise with unbusinesslike methods shown by the Telephone branch of the Post Office. The Department is now advertising the advantages and utility of the telephone, especially for domestic purposes, instead of leaving publicity in the hands of an association of makers of telephone apparatus. It is also extending a cordial invitation to the public to inspect new exchanges equipped with the automatic system, in the hope that the object lesson may lead to orders for installations. All this is to the good, but I cannot see much sense in advertising the cheapness of the service so long as the present rental system is maintained.

On the basis of present charges, a telephone user making an average of two calls a day pays 3d. for each call, including the rental charge. Even where the instrument is used much more frequently and the cost of a call is proportionately reduced, the fact remains that the rental charge is made in perpetuity, without the subscriber being given the option to buy the instrument. The official justification is that no charge is made for installation; since the rental works out at a minimum of £60 in ten years, this seems to be a case of using a sprat to catch a whale, and helps to explain why the telephone is in England still so largely regarded as a luxury, instead of the everyday necessity it could and should be.

Waterloo Bridge.

A considerable fluster is betrayed in official circles at the long delay by the government in reaching its decision as to what sum, if any, shall be allotted from the Road Fund to a new or reconstructed Waterloo Bridge. The complete abandonment of a new Charing Cross bridge "in our time," as Mr. Maxton would say, surely justifies the L.C.C., the democratic authority responsible, in pressing for a million pounds towards its new structure to carry six lines of north-south traffic.

The scandal of this derelict bridge has surely continued far too long. What was once a beautiful structure is now an eyesore, and what was once a study in architectural unity has now become an object-lesson in divided municipal and national authority. If Mr. Neville Chamberlain can spare time from his duties as Chancellor of the Exchequer to give a good Birmingham kick to the laggards of London, he should do so without delay. The ordinary Cockney will be grateful to him.

Business Moves West.

Meantime, Charing Cross station is in the limelight again, but this time as the clearing house of city business. Instead of scrapping it the Southern Railway now intend to add greatly to its importance and to use it as the destination of many trains which previously ran into Cannon Street station. This, they say, is necessitated by the westward trend of business which has followed the development of the Aldwych and Kingsway; a change from the old days when 80 per cent. of the South Eastern suburban traffic had its entrance and exit at Cannon Street.

It is, of course, good news to hear that business is moving at all, even if it is only going west, and one is forced to believe there is something in it if it can stir the Southern Railway to develop Charing Cross. That most central of all stations has languished since the Continental services were transferred from there to Victoria, but it now seems likely to come back into fashion with the steady growth of the Bromley and Dartford lines.

The Springboks' Record.

Having defeated England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales and lost only one of its twenty-six engagements, the South African Rugby football team this week returns home trailing as many scalps as its predecessors. Already the press has started a "What is Wrong with British Rugby?" ramp, for which, as usual, there is no need. There is quite a simple reason why touring teams find it so easy to win practically all their games.

With the exception of Oxford and Cambridge, every team they meet is a scratch one, often containing men who have never heard of one another before. If the Rugby Union would change the method of arranging fixtures and let the clubs, such as the Harlequins, Blackheath, Bristol and Leicester, play the visitors on their own, tourists would find it far harder to obtain these ridiculous records which reflect so poorly on the standard of British sport. Foreigners are apt to judge us by our showing in international contests, and continued losses can do little good to our prestige abroad.

Sun-Bathing Arrives.

The news that Hove's new pier will include ample facilities for sun-bathing can be taken as the definite arrival of the cult of the sun-bather. In spite of the authorities and that army of zealous busybodies who make it their duty to hamper their fellow beings as often as possible, sun-bathing has come to stay, and now that Hove has seen fit to offer official recognition I hope there will be no further protests against its immorality. Those who favour the cult should be allowed to bask without comment.

Indeed, I cannot for the life of me see why the roofs of the great new buildings in London should not be used for this purpose. A medical man assured me recently that a month on Mr. Selfridge's roof would be as good a tonic as a holiday at Eastbourne, and while he cast an approving eye on Lord Beaverbrook's new glass-house for the *Daily Express* in Shoe Lane, he suggested that the top might have its uses as a sanatorium.

DEBTS AND DELAYS

IT would be idle to pretend that public opinion throughout Europe is not shocked at the levity that statesmen, with the significant exception of Signor Mussolini, are displaying towards that most important of all problems, the question of debts and reparations. First of all the matter was to be thoroughly threshed out at Lausanne, then when Germany said that she could not pay any more—an attitude which everyone knew that she would adopt—France retorted that she would not attend the conference at all, and hinted darkly at the pressure she could bring to bear upon her neighbours on the other side of the Rhine; now, apparently, there is still to be a conference at Lausanne, but it seems to have been settled in advance that nothing definite shall be decided there. It is melancholy to think that this kind of futility can pass for statecraft; but meanwhile paralysis is creeping over Europe, and in some places people are beginning to eat the dogs in the streets.

The reason that the Lausanne conference is to be an official farce is that in France and Germany elections are to take place in the near future, and the statesmen of these countries do not wish to have to make up their minds—or at any rate to reveal their minds—until they know whether they are to retain their seats: in other words it has at last become obvious that they are afraid of their own people, and that the troubles of Europe are in no small measure due to Democracy. But elections are always about to take place somewhere or other, and if the present decision (or rather indecision) is to become a precedent, it will not be long before no international question can ever be settled at all. In short, the negative attitude adopted by the Powers towards the Lausanne Conference is the most striking practical argument in favour of dictatorship that the world has seen, and if it be persisted in the nations will draw their own conclusions.

Now it is also quite clear that if nothing is to be accomplished at Lausanne, nothing will be accomplished at Geneva. Stripped of all the verbiage dear to the pacifist, armaments are neither more nor less than the outward and visible sign of a nation's fear of its neighbours, and that fear is the product of instability. At the present time the prevailing international instability is due to the unsettled problem of debts and reparations, and until the latter is out of the way there is not the slightest hope of more stable conditions prevailing. France will certainly not disarm until the financial position has been settled, and unless she disarms Italy naturally will not, and so on *ad infinitum*. In these circumstances, the disarmament conference is bound to end in failure, and in our opinion it would be better from every point of view to postpone it until something has been decided, one way or the other, with regard to debts and reparations.

What, then, is the solution? Signor Mussolini outlined it in his articles last week. Let such of the debts as will cancel be cancelled, and then fix a sum that Germany must pay, at the same time telling her that if she agrees to this the ex-Allied Powers will facilitate those long-term credits which she so urgently needs. It is true that the Italian Prime Minister did not go quite so far as this, but we have no doubt that this was what he had in mind, for the formation of a united front to Washington also implies the formation of a united front to Berlin. In such a case, of course, the European States would not stand to benefit in actual cash, for the amount received from Germany on account of reparations would have to be passed on to the United States, or Congress would not even consider the proposition; but on the other hand, we should all get rid of the millstone that has been hanging round our necks for so long.

What is certain is that this country can no longer continue to pay its creditors and forgive its debtors. Most of our debt to the United States was incurred on behalf of the Powers of the Continent, and yet while we pay to America 72 per cent. of what we owe, France only pays us 38 per cent., and Italy 14 per cent. of what she owes us. In addition, we are owed no less than £900,000,000 by Russia, of which we have never received a penny by way either of repayment of capital or payment of interest, and probably never shall, while we have actually paid the United States £200,000,000 more than we have received from all our European debtors combined.

It may be true that to a very large extent this unsatisfactory state of affairs is due to the maladroit diplomacy of the British Government which negotiated the settlement, but the position has recently been made considerably worse by the fact that whereas our debtors pay us in pounds, we have to pay the United States in dollars. This cannot go on, and it is in Britain's interest to effect as speedy a settlement as possible.

What is wanted is a little clear thinking, and an appreciation of the realities of the situation. Whether Paris and Washington like it or not, a great deal of water has flowed beneath the bridges since the Armistice, and the rest of the world, outside France and the United States, is looking to the future rather than to the past. France is obsessed by the fear of an Italo-German combination against her, and yet her attitude both in the matter of reparations and armaments is calculated to precipitate the very catastrophe which she dreads.

The United States also—to take another angle—must export or perish, and yet by insisting upon its pound of flesh in the matter of debts it is so impoverishing its foreign customers that they can no longer afford to deal with it. Furthermore, the sooner each country abandons the belief that the other fellow must do all the paying the nearer we shall be to a settlement. This sort of thing solves no problems, and to accuse other people of bilking is not the way to satisfy one's own creditors. At the moment the whole world is at the "you're another" stage of the financial argument, and it is high time that statesmen and people alike took a more practical view of the problem without further delay.

In fine, the pre-requisite of a solution is a realisation of the fact that there must be sacrifices all round. Let the world's statesmen forget the circumstances of 1918, and the post-war atmosphere of 1919 in which the treaties of peace were drawn up, and concentrate rather upon those of 1932. We have the experience of thirteen years to prove that the present system is unworkable, and surely that in itself is an argument that a change of some sort is inevitable. Signor Mussolini, to his eternal credit, has taken the first step in declaring that the Gordian Knot must be cut, since it clearly cannot be untied, and we rejoice that signs are not wanting that the Foreign Office is prepared to follow the lead of Italy.

A little courage, and the thing is done, for the whole world, even the official world, is beginning to realise that the payments on the old scale will never be resumed. It is true that some demagogues still attempt to delude the people with the belief that astronomical amounts can still be paid by one country to another for the next two generations, and that this trick is still effective as a piece of vote-catching at election times, but slowly the true facts about the economic position of Europe and America and their mutual interdependence are becoming understood, and the light having once dawned will not be quenched.

THE FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

By LT.-COMMANDER THE HON. J. M. KENWORTHY, R.N.

I WAS talking to one of my fellow-conspirators of the Labour Party the other day; and we discussed its future. My friend is a great man of affairs, and a "modern" in every sense of the word. We observed how the new Government has been legislating at high pressure for several weeks, but that there are few signs of activity or propaganda or of a "campaign" by our Party in the country. The opposition in Parliament, of course, has its hands full. But where, we asked ourselves, are the great figures of the Labour Party who were members of the last Cabinet? We came to the conclusion that they are stunned. But to be stunned is a temporary condition, and we wondered whether they would "come to"; or if it was a case of concussion of the brain?

Obviously a Labour Party has a future, if for no other reason than that there must be an alternative governing party to take office when the people get sick of the administration in power; which always happens in time. If Lord Grey and his friends have their way and succeed in destroying the Labour Party including, of course, the I.L.P., the alternatives will be either the anti-National Liberal Party, consisting at present of the Lloyd-George menage and Mr. Edgar Wallace; or the Communists. Nevertheless, we both thought there was a future for the Labour Party; though we shall not float back into power simply by the swing of the pendulum.

The survival value of the Labour Party depends upon its production of a constructive alternative policy, and its explanation and acceptance by the people. This will entail hard thinking and missionary fervour. We shall not be taken on trust again.

To be frank, the Labour Party had grown too rapidly. Only one-third of the population are Socialists, of various brands. The Party took office twice when it was still in the propaganda stage, and before this propaganda, or popular education, had fully prepared the public mind. We tried to reap the harvest before it had ripened. That is why, on both occasions, we were caught without a policy for a Government supported only by a minority party in Parliament.

It was absurd for some of our leaders to plead that our policy of "Labour and the Nation" necessitated a working majority in the House of Commons. If they had no minority policy ready they had no business to take office. But having done so, they should have brought forward the policy they thought right and necessary, and fought on that earlier on in the last Parliament.

The lack of definite plans is proved by the setting up of 70 or so Committees on every conceivable subject, from the liquor trade to national parks; and the creation of a body known as the Economic Advisory Council which, despite the eminence of its personnel, served no useful purpose, and is now to be wound up.

The cruel truth is that the Party was under the control of men with pre-war minds; and the post-war world required a policy beyond their comprehension.

Here, in outline, is the kind of policy that must be worked out in the wilderness and explained to the electorate in advance. A policy cannot be expounded and made to be understood during a General Election. Thus, the Tariff policy was certainly voted for on the last occasion as the result of nearly thirty years of intensive agitation and evangelism by the Protection wing of the Conservative Party.

We of the modern Labour Party must start from the basic fact that Viscount Snowden's panacea of achieving Socialism through taxation is unworkable. It was only an extreme form of Gladstonian liberalism in any case. In the twentieth century the standard of living can only be raised by a better organisation of the means

of producing and distributing wealth. I suggest that the prime need of post-war England is a national plan; and that it can only be carried out under State direction and control. This does not mean the extension of State Socialism such as the Post Office, or the very efficient Office of Works; but the setting up of public utilities like the Port of London Authority and the Electricity Commissioners.

The London Traffic Bill, now proposed to be slaughtered, was betwixt and between private enterprise and the public utility; and will not do the next time. There are certain basic industries that are not only ripe for national planning, but must be so planned and organised if the economic fabric of the country is to escape mortal injury. These include coal, electricity, the railways, and while we are about it, transport generally, iron and steel and textiles. With the exception of road transport, private enterprise has failed in all these industries; or is failing. Electricity, as regards generation and transmission, has come under a national plan already, but should be linked with the railways and coal. The choice lies between a monopolistic private trust and a public utility corporation.

A great deal of detailed work is needed before the form of the new policy can emerge.

Thus the railways: they are controlled and guaranteed now; but it is admitted that they must be amalgamated nationally, and brought under some form of unified control. But that is not enough. Shall they be electrified, or shall we go for the cheaper Diesel driven electric-traction; or, as will most probably be the case, a combination of both, with electrification in the thickly populated districts, and oil-electric traction in the country districts. And are we going to use heavy oil, which is rapidly taking the place of petrol, imported from Texas and Persia; or heavy oil extracted from our own coal?

It may take four, five, or even more years, for the political pendulum to swing back. I suggest that in any case the pendulum will have to be helped, and when it is swinging we Socialists want to retain it in the leftward position. This can only be done by insuring that the people understand what the Labour Party is after.

So with Agriculture. Are we going to take over the agricultural land of the country, or are we not; and if we take it over, what are we going to do with it? A good deal will depend on what we believe to be the future of farming in a country like our own.

Some of us think that the future methods of agriculture will be large-scale operations on factory lines, with 100 per cent. mechanisation. We have the beginnings of this in England already; and these beginnings pay. The most profitable farming in the world to-day is the American and Russian large scale tillage with huge farms and agricultural machines able to work at night (as well as by day) by means of portable floodlights. The agricultural labourer will be a highly skilled mechanic, working in shifts.

There is a one-million acre farm already in Russia, supervised by an American factory-farming expert; while in the United States the rationalised farming companies can produce crops at one-third the cost of those grown by the old-fashioned homestead farmer, working by day only with his two or three hired men. We believe that the same principle must be applied to agriculture in this country if England is not to become a vast prairie save for a few golf courses and market gardens, the latter surviving owing to heavy tariffs on imported vegetables and flowers.

Here is an agricultural revolution as far-reaching and as startling as the industrial revolution of last century,

when hand weaving was displaced by the textile factory, and the stage-coach by the railway. But this, we think, can only be done by public enterprise. The population of these Islands would not allow such a reshaping of the English countryside by City financiers.

An even more thorny problem to be tackled is the great subject of banking, credit, currency and exchange. Just as the younger school of Labour politicians intend that we shall never again take office as a minority government, so do we mean to insist that we shall never attempt to govern again under the veto and domination of the financiers of the City of London. But there is not only the principle of democracy involved. There must be a sorting out of the muddle, common to our own and other countries, that we are beginning to call the "curse" of plenty. Or, to put it another way, the machinery of distribution and exchange is inadequate to the great scale of production which, we freely admit, the capital system has built up. Private enterprise produces, or can produce, the goods. But cannot deliver them.

The wheels of production cannot turn at full speed without flooding the market and ruining the producers. We actually erect barriers to prevent wealth in tangible form from reaching us from abroad.

The burning of wheat and coffee in the New World, the compulsory stoppage by Government action of coal mines in England, the artificial restrictions on the production of cotton, rubber, copper, oil, tin, and other basic commodities, are all symptoms of economic insanity.

We see the United States in despair engaging in primitive barter of wheat for coffee with Brazil; and the same operation of tobacco for textiles between Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

The Governments and Central Banks of half the countries in Europe including our own, dare not let the existing exchange and credit system work for fear of a general break down. For example, an importer in Britain is not allowed to insure himself by buying forward exchange. Yet our pre-war politicians of all parties still live mentally in an out-of-date world where famine and scarcity were the dangers, and where the present state of over-abundance was unknown.

If the Labour Party shows it has a real policy on the few pressing problems mentioned, and can convince the electorate that it means to apply them, it will certainly revive and come to power. The Party with leaders who are prepared to lead will certainly be followed by the country.

THE PIONEER OF PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION: WILLIAM SHIPPEN—I.

BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE

IT is not a little curious that in spite of the fierce light which has of late years been turned upon even the minor personages of the eighteenth-century career of William Shippen should have been so much neglected. The Dictionary of National Biography devotes some three and a half columns to an account of his life written by Thomas Seccombe, and there are one or two references to him in the "Gentleman's Magazine," and in the earlier number of "Notes and Queries," but that is all, for even Sir Henry Imbert-Terry in his recent study of the reign of George I contents himself with a passing mention. Yet so great an authority as the late Lord Rosebery ranked him with Pulteney, Carteret, and Chesterfield; while Pope's reference to him is certainly better known than he is himself:

I love to pour out all myself, as plain
As honest Shippen, or downright Montaigne.

For an eighteenth century politician to have acquired let alone to have deserved a reputation for honesty is in itself sufficient to recommend him to the attention of posterity.

The Shippens were a Cheshire family of some considerable importance, and several books dealing with the history of that county devote much space to them. The father of William was Rector of Stockport, while an uncle emigrated to America and became the first Mayor of Philadelphia, where his descendants are said to be still found. William himself was born in 1673, but there are few records of his early life. He was educated at Stockport Grammar School, then at Westminster, and finally at Trinity College, Cambridge, after which he studied law at the Middle Temple, and was called to the Bar. In 1695 he married a daughter of Sir Richard Stote of Northumberland, and as his wife brought him a considerable fortune, while he had a small income of his own, Shippen was relieved of the necessity of earning his living. At the same time, his married life does not seem to have been a particularly happy one, for he and his wife did not live together in their later days, since she made her home at Richmond, and he had a house in Norfolk Street, Strand. Beyond these bare facts nothing is known of William Shippen at this period of his career, but it may well be that there is very little else to know, for he seems to have belonged to that

numerous class of men who mature comparatively late.

Towards the middle of Queen Anne's reign Shippen entered public life, again for reasons which are obscure, and in 1707 he was returned to the House of Commons for the constituency of Bramber in Sussex. He was, however, unseated on petition, but was re-elected for the same borough three years later. From this date until his death Shippen sat in every Parliament, though on two occasions he changed his constituency; in 1713 he left Bramber for Saltash in Cornwall, and in the following year he migrated to Newton, in Lancashire, which he represented for the rest of his life. Like many a great man, Shippen does not seem to have made much impression upon his contemporaries during his first years in the House of Commons, but that is hardly surprising when it is remembered that his entry into politics coincided with the great days of Harley and St. John. The death of the Queen, however, and the break-up of the Tory Party which followed that event, gave him his opportunity, and Shippen soon became, as Macauley described Gladstone, "the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories." Indeed, it is not difficult to understand why he should have espoused the Jacobite cause, for all his connections were with Lancashire and Cheshire, and those counties, both then and for long afterwards, were zealous in their support of the exiled Royal House.

The complete want of capacity which the Tory leaders, though firmly entrenched in place and power, has displayed at the death of Anne, not only established their opponents in office for the two succeeding generations, but also split their own party from top to bottom. With Bolingbroke and Oxford no longer at their head, and with the dreaded accession of the Elector of Hanover an accomplished fact, the remaining Tories were prepared to follow almost any leader who presented himself. Into the vacant place Shippen, by force of character rather than by any outstanding genius, forced his way, and for over twenty years he was the acknowledged Jacobite leader in the House of Commons. He did not, of course, count all the followers of his predecessors in his ranks, for there were many Tories who would not accept a Catholic King, while others retired from public life altogether at the frustration of their hopes, and yet a third section had to take refuge in exile; but upon any

important division the records show that the Jacobites could generally muster about fifty votes, to which were often added the Tories under Sir William Wyndham and the discontented Whigs. It took Shippen several years to weld together the various elements that supported the Stuarts, and at first his voice was raised almost alone on their behalf, to such an extent were the constitutional Jacobites overawed, first by the peaceful accession of George, and later by the failure of the Fifteen.

One of the earliest acts of the triumphant Whigs was to offer a reward for the capture of James, and this measure Shippen, with very little support, strongly opposed as soon as it was brought before the House. In the rising of the following year Shippen took no part, and in this he was true to the policy which he seems to have outlined for himself and his followers from the moment he began to play a prominent part in public affairs. On no single occasion was he ever involved in any of the innumerable plots to restore the Stuarts by force of arms; he believed that the King would one day

enjoy his own again as the result of his activities in Parliament, and it was Shippen's belief in the House of Commons that gained him so much prestige even among his bitterest opponents there, for, then as now, the House always respected one whose reputation had been made within its walls, and who was, as Shippen certainly was, above all else a "House of Commons man."

The Septennial Bill gave him his next opportunity of asserting himself. That measure, after being violently attacked in the House of Lords by Atterbury, only passed its second reading there by thirty-four votes, and when it reached the lower House Shippen broke entirely new ground by invoking democratic sanction against it, to such length may the defenders of Divine Right be driven when in opposition. The Bill, of course, was passed, but a hundred and sixty votes were cast against its second reading, and Shippen enormously enhanced his personal prestige by the attitude he had adopted.

(To be concluded)

INDIAN PRINCES AND FEDERATION

(FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT).

HIS Highness the Maharaja of Patiala as the ruler of the most important Sikh State in India, and as the Chancellor of the Indian Chamber of Princes for the past five years, has been occupying a pre-eminent position in the public life of India. He has an influential following among the Indian Princes, and also enjoys the friendship of many leading Indian politicians in British India. Therefore it was during the last year's sittings of the Indian Round Table Conference that His Highness came to play a leading role, and it was perhaps largely due to his initiative that the idea of a Federal Government in India comprising Indian States and British India came to be considered seriously. His Highness was, however, cautious enough not to commit himself to any hasty decision; he only blessed the idea of federation as an ultimate possibility.

On his return to India in March last, His Highness was compelled, by the events that were then happening in India, to reconsider his previous views regarding the scheme of federation between the States and British India. The more he thought of this question the more was His Highness convinced that a scheme of federation as outlined during last year's sittings of the Conference, could not be in the interests of the Indian Princes. Because, above everything else, a study of all the implications in the proposed scheme would easily convince anyone that under it the Indian States would certainly be denuded of their sovereign power and authority. To this extent, therefore, the prestige and prerogatives of the Indian Princes would have had to be surrendered. And indeed for all this colossal surrender the Indian Princes would have gained precious little advantage. For this reason His Highness realised that it was urgently necessary that the scheme should be materially and substantially altered and supplemented in order to preserve and maintain the present position of the State.

Therefore, with the courage of his convictions, in July last, the Maharaja of Patiala issued an important statement wherein he explained how the true interests of the Indian Princes would never be safe in a federation between themselves and British India on the lines of the proposed scheme. After having elaborately explained this point of view, His Highness offered a constructive scheme which the Indian Princes could adopt to the advantage of themselves, British India, and the British Government. Thus, in his opinion, the really honest scheme which would conserve the privileges and rights of Indian Princes, which would secure the interests of Great Britain in India, and which would also further the progress of responsible government in British India, was by making the Indian Princes come together into a compact,

strong, and well organised assembly which could negotiate, discuss, and work in co-operation with the coming democratic forms of government in British India.

In sum, His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala desired, along with His Highness of Dholpur, not a federation between British Indian Provinces and individual Indian Princes, but a confederation of all the Indian States as the first necessary preliminary step towards the achievement of a federation between the Indian States and the British Indian Provinces.

When this scheme was announced in India it raised a great deal of controversy; but week after week that passed brought in a crop of new converts among the Indian Princes. In order to fully debate the whole question and appreciate other points of view, the Maharaja of Patiala summoned two Conferences of Indian Princes and their Ministers in Bombay during July and August last. These meetings were attended by important Princes and their Ministers, who, after a thorough examination of the entire scheme of confederation, endorsed it.

The bedrock of the scheme is the assertion that no constitution should be acceptable to the Indian Princes which involved, *inter alia*:

- (1) the creation of a new State and consequent imposition of uniform nationality and double allegiance on the subjects of the States;
- (2) the subordination of Indian States to the legislative authority of the Imperial Parliament from which the States are at present immune in view of their peculiar legal position, and
- (3) encroachment upon the rights and powers of the States and the status and prerogatives of their Rulers.

When the recent Conference commenced its sittings in London, support for the scheme of confederation increased. All the new schemes being submitted during the sittings of the Conference from Indian Princes agreed in accepting the cardinal principles of the Patiala and Dholpur scheme, although they might differ from each other in minor details. Thus the memorandum of the Raja of Sarila, who represents the so-called smaller Indian States at the Conference, and the scheme of His Highness the Maharaja of Indore, both plead not for federation between British Indian units and individual Indian States, but for a confederation of the Indian States and through it a federation with British India. Therefore the number of Indian Princes who support the contentions of the Maharaja of Patiala is on the increase, and the Patiala-Dholpur point of view is bound to predominate in the councils of the Indian Princes.

OIL FROM COAL

By P. B. WALLACE

(A reply to an article by Capt. Bernard Acworth in "The Saturday Review" of December 12, 1931, Ed.)

"WE have become importers of oil fuel to the value of roughly £40,000,000 a year."

"The one thing certain that emerged from this experiment (carbonization and hydrogenation of coal) was that it was scientifically possible to provide the bulk of our oil by the treatment of coal." (Lord Rutherford in the House of Lords, May 20, 1931).

"Oil research had now arrived at such a stage that it was almost possible to say that provided the Government were prepared to impose a tax on imported petrol, and allow petrol made from coal to go tax free, that industry (extraction of oil from coal) might be set up almost at once." (Earl Stanhope, *ibid*).

"A plant to hydrogenate 1,000 tons of clean, dry coal a day could produce No. 1 motor spirit, and sell it at present standard retail prices with a small profit, after allowing for all costs of raw material, manufacture, repairs, obsolescence and distribution.

"It is not contended, however, that such a profit as the above would attract capital. It is mentioned as an indication of the fact that the hydrogenation process has already reached a stage at which only a very slight rise in the price of petrol is required to render it a self-supporting commercial proposition." (Extract of letter from Sir Harry McGowan, Chairman, Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd., to the "Times," August 11, 1931).

The above extracts from the speeches and writings of responsible public men during 1931 may be said to summarize briefly but fairly the present position as regards the production of fuel oil from coal in this country. Even taken as they stand, they point to the fact that there is a strong case for the immediate imposition, and guarantee of retention, of such a duty on imported oil as would render the production of fuel from British coal a proposition attractive to capital. But when the arguments for and against such a tax are set out in detail, it will be seen that the case for it is well-nigh unanswerable.

First and foremost comes the British coal-mining industry. At present this is, taken as a whole, in a desperate condition, owing to high production costs. These are primarily due to the artificially high wages paid in the War years; as a result of the retention of of them after the War, we lost a large proportion of our export trade in coal. A diminution of the export trade led inevitably to reduced output from the mines. Reduced output means in turn still higher production costs per ton of coal delivered, since overhead charges remain constant. It is in fact a vicious circle, which can only be broken when a use can be found for the full output of the mines, working to their economic capacity.

The treatment of coal for the production of the oil fuel consumed in this country, and by the Navy and Commercial shipping, would in time go far, if not the whole distance, towards enabling this essential state of affairs to be brought about. Then coal would again be exported at competitive prices, and coal-mining would again assume its proper position in British industry.

Reduced production costs for coal would in their turn benefit all the industries which depend on coal, such as, for instance, the manufacture of steel, cement, etc., the production of gas and electricity, and our vast shipping industry still largely dependent on coal for its bunkers.

Next must be considered the number of men who would be reabsorbed into the mines, and in the manufacture, construction and working of the hydrogenation and carbonization plants. "The Engineer" of August 7 in a leading article stated that our present annual consumption of liquid fuel of various kinds amounted to 9 million tons. Assuming a future consumption of 10

millions, 30 million tons of coal would be required for its production. This would give employment to many thousands of men, both in the mines and controlling the plants.

The reduction of price owing to increased output would also mean that many workers would be reabsorbed by industries dependent on coal, but not at present working to full capacity through prevailing conditions.

The saving to the country in unemployment benefit would, or should, react on taxation, in itself one of the chief evils from which industry in this country is suffering.

With petrol at its present price, consequent on world over-production, it is unlikely that an increase of a few pence in the import duty would greatly reduce the quantity of petrol imported in the early years of the scheme, when the hydrogenation and carbonization plants were still under construction. There would therefore be an immediate increase in the yield of the revenue tariff on imported fuel.

Then there are the Defence services to be considered. With an Air Force entirely dependent on imported petrol, an Army every day more and more so dependent as mechanisation proceeds, and a Navy depending for its eyes upon petrol-using air-craft, and upon heavy oil for its motive power, it is difficult to envisage with any degree of satisfaction the situation that would arise in war should we lose even temporarily the command of the seas, upon which our fuel imports depend.

Finally, as Lord Rutherford said in the House of Lords, our trade balance would ultimately be improved to the extent of £40,000,000 a year, the amount we now spend on imported fuel alone, without taking into consideration the increase in our exports of cheapened coal, and of goods dependent on such coal for their manufacture and transport overseas.

To turn to the objections that may be raised to the above arguments.

Firstly, there is the problem of the huge amount of capital that would be required to construct the hydrogenation and carbonization plants. This, as the Chairman of the Imperial Chemical Industries pointed out in his letter above mentioned, is a question solely of probable profits. There is any amount of capital in search of sound investments which are not liable to sudden depreciation, and if the Government were to guarantee a sliding scale duty on imported oil always sufficiently high as to give a fair margin of profit on the home-made article, there is little doubt that private capital would be instantly forthcoming.

In this connection, the probable action of the big Oil-importing companies must be taken into consideration. It is unlikely that they would allow their throats to be cut without a struggle, and their most obvious act of self-preservation would be the investment of some of their large reserves in the new home-production plants.

The second objection that will be raised is that the increase in the price of petrol caused by an enhanced duty would be detrimental to all industries using petrol-consuming road transport, including the private car industry.

As regards commercial and passenger-carrying transport, it is true that the effect might be to drive a certain amount of traffic back to the railways. This would be by no means undesirable. Sooner or later steps will in any case have to be taken to protect a national asset as valuable as our railway system, and the sooner this is done the better.

As regards private users, for the reasons already given, it is unlikely that an increase of a few pence a gallon in the price of petrol would deter very many private

individuals from acquiring cars, and the threat to the motor car industry cannot be regarded as serious.

Finally there is the argument that the country could not afford to lose the amount now received from the petrol tax when the country had become self-supporting in the matter of oil fuel, since there would be no compensating revenue from home-produced oil. This aspect of the question can be briefly dismissed by a consideration of the savings that would accrue to the country under the head of unemployment benefit to the men reabsorbed into the coal mining and dependent industries.

Now that Free Trade fetish in England has been, it is hoped finally exorcised, it is a little difficult to understand why the Coal industry has not urged the National Government to consider this obvious form of protection, or why the Government has not itself instituted enquiries into the matter. If the reason for this latter is that the Government is itself a large shareholder in an oil-

importing Company, this may be a strong argument against the State having a direct financial interest in any commercial concern, but it is no argument against a tariff which would put a vital home industry on its legs again.

The alternative method of re-establishing the coal industry (suggested by Captain Acworth), viz., reversion to coal burning in the Navy and merchant service, is open to the serious objection that it would put the Navy at a great strategical and tactical disadvantage vis à vis other Navies burning oil, and that neither the Navy nor the merchant service could in these days of financial stringency afford the extra complements of stokers required for coal-fired furnaces. There is, however, no reason why they should not burn oil produced from British coal, either under their boilers for steam production, or more directly in internal combustion engines, except possibly that of cost.

THE BROTHERS

By BEVERLEY NICHOLS

IT would be very easy to parody "The Brothers" by L. A. G. Strong, which is the Book Society's choice for January. Very easy, for example, to write a scene like this:—

Fergus leant over the side of the rock. Below him he could see the dark sinuous weed and pale patches of sand. Suddenly, a brown shape detached itself from the weed. Like a flash Fergus dived. A second later his immense head emerged. He bore a large lobster struggling in his mouth. He spat out the lobster, gave it one look, and it died.

Six times Fergus did this. The last time that he came from under the water, his teeth were closed on the tail of a tremendous seal. He gave it a swift jerk and it landed gasping on the rocks. He gave it one look, and it died.

On his way home, through the liquid morning, with the lobsters in his pocket, and the seal dangling over his arm, he met Willie McFarish.

"Where did you get that seal?" asked Willie McFarish. Gravely, Fergus told him.

"You are a—," cried Willie. Fergus stepped back. Willie had said the "word."

It was the word which for ten generations had lain like a naked sword between the McFarish's and the Macraes. And now Willie had drawn that sword.

Tossing the seal onto the grass, he leapt upon Willie, and bit off his right ear. The two men struggled silently. From time to time there was a sound of a crack, as Fergus broke one of Willie's bones. . . .

One could go on, like this, without much difficulty, for "The Brothers" being a work of genius, creates its own men, who are not men of this world, though they are real enough. These men do astonishing things . . . things which seem incredible, when judged by our own timid little standards of conduct. Their seductions are Herculean, and, if I may be forgiven for saying so, extremely uncomfortable. Their quarrels are terrific, their hates as frightening as the clouds that sweep above them.

Now if "The Brothers" were a sham work of art, humour would damage it. One can poke one's finger through stucco. But this book is not stucco, it is granite. And if I try to poke my finger through it, I shall hurt my finger. Which is only another way of saying that the man who tries to parody Mr. Strong is made to look a fool, not Mr. Strong.

I am surprised that none of the eminent persons who have been writing about "The Brothers" should have mentioned D. H. Lawrence, for it is essentially a book which D. H. Lawrence would have loved. It would be untrue to say that Strong is "influenced" by Lawrence—

it is, however, a fact that both men respond to similar impressions. There is a scene where the elder brother is challenged by some of his rivals to lift a stone of immense weight. Listen to this:—

"As he stood above it, his arms dangling loosely from his shoulders, he let his mind go blank, and every muscle of his body relax, asking the stone a question; waiting to receive the inspiration, the sympathy with inanimate things which come to men who handled them. Strength flowed up through his feet from the ground, his fat legs were the roots of a tree, his body the strong, supple trunk. . . ."

I can almost hear Lawrence catch his ghostly breath with delight at this passage. Similar influences had so often come to him, during his life, from things animate and inanimate. Strange mists of passion had drifted up from the dark earth, and from the body of a snake gliding through the grass flashed fires which were not caused by the glistening scales alone. And constantly, through this book, Lawrence would have found scenes to enthral him. As an example one may quote the terrible struggle of Fergus with the conger eel. It does not sound promising material for a novelist . . . a fisherman kneeling down on a rock, trying to draw his hand out of a pool. Mr. Strong makes it one of the most exciting and frightening combats in literature. And though I have not the faintest idea what a conger eel looks like, nor what it bites with, nor why it chooses to behave in such an unpleasant manner, I was forced, by the quality of the writing, to create my own eel in its dark image.

I made reference, above, to the immense scale in which the actions of the brothers is cast. Both of them are murderers. Both have been drunkards yet . . . and this is an interesting reflection . . . one does not in the least blame them. They had to do what they did. Here is a literary variation of "tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner." Mr. Strong has understood everything about these two men and their motives, and he has therefore pardoned them. And since he has the talent for setting before us all the essentials of their minds, we pardon them too. This is, indeed, one of the great tests of fine art . . . that we do not lay down the book with hatred of these strange figures, but with pity.

And now it is high time that the Book Society did something very naughty indeed. It has given us five good books in succession, and one of my ink-pots . . . the one with the acid in it . . . is rapidly becoming congealed. If, however, the Society won't do it unconsciously, I wish that they would follow Mr. Osbert Sitwell's suggestion and offer us, just for once, as a warning, or as a possible subject of entertainment, the Worst Book of the Month. I could give them a great many suggestions.

THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

CAN SUICIDE BE MORAL?

YES, BY SYDNEY HAMPDEN.

"SUICIDE while of unsound mind" is civilisation's carefully thought out phrase for concealing the fact that a man or woman is ever justified in taking his own life. "The man took his own life, therefore he is insane" is the argument and very, very rarely do we read of a verdict of "Felo-de-se." Very few people would have the courage to support the view that suicide is ever justified, in other words, it is moral.

But this has not always been the case. The Roman soldier ran on a sword held by his slave rather than face the degradation of capture alive by a barbarian. Nero was reckoned a coward because he could not screw up his courage to take his own life. Hari-kiri amongst the flower of Japanese chivalry was—and is, for that matter—not so much a question of suicide as a sacrament. The time may well come again when a man who walks into a Government office and says "I have reached the end of my tether. I am no use to society, and a burden to my family. May I fill up a form for a painless death?" will be reckoned a good citizen and not a criminal.

Even the staunchest advocate of the immorality of suicide will waver under cross-examination. "Suppose I was alone in the world, without a friend, and slowly dying of an incurable disease, should I be justified in taking my own life?" That question will cause hesitation, and "buts" before a direct answer is obtained. "But the disease might be curable" you will be told. No medical man will claim infallibility, but there are certain diseases the fatality of which cannot be denied. Does a sufferer do the world or even his own small part of society any wrong, by choosing a quick, comparatively painless death in place of months of suffering during which he is a burden to his friends, however sympathetic they may be?

You will generally get a few converts to the opinion that in the case of incurable disease painless death—which amounts to suicide—may not be immoral. More than a few people expect to see euthanasia or painless death legalised in a few years. But from suicide because of physical pain to suicide because of mental stress is a greater step for European peoples.

The question whether suicide is, or is not, moral is of importance to the ordinary man only in relation to our attitude towards the would-be suicide. The Church definitely banishes him. He is not, like an unchristened child, allowed to be buried in consecrated ground. If he is unfortunate enough to recover, he has added to his other troubles the agony of a trial on a criminal charge.

This attitude is obviously wrong. If a man who had attempted suicide had been successful the verdict would have been "Suicide while of unsound mind." The mere fact that he was unsuccessful could not indicate a change in his state of mind. Why try a man who is obviously insane?

The fact is that it is not suicide we consider immoral, but the motives that lead to it. A man who falls on an exploding bomb to save his comrades is a suicide. But he is hailed as a national hero. If he had had no comrades, and he had been unfortunate enough to survive the explosion, he would have been tried for attempted suicide! It is almost as absurd as the high caste Indian who employs a servant to catch the fleas in his clothes, because he himself must not take life!

Our whole attitude towards suicide is built up on an exaggerated idea of the importance of death. Any biologist would correct these ideas. Religions which are not based on Christianity do not have them. In some cases suicide may be not only not moral, but the only moral thing to do.

NO, BY GEORGE GREENWOOD.

WITHOUT hope for the future few would wish to go on living. At best life is not for anyone a continuous progress of joy and successful achievement. Indeed we can only measure happiness or achievement by our periods of failure and experiences which move us to sadness. The good things we seek in this world are good merely by comparison with events in our past lives and with the lives of others. To-day we may be on the top of a pinnacle envied, and elated by success while to-morrow we may be cast out, neglected and forgotten by the crowd.

It is at these periods when fortune is perhaps teaching us our bitterest and most severe lesson, that we are sorely tempted to take our lives—to end our connection with this very thankless world. By philosophy we can persuade ourselves that almost any course is right. But why should we wish one day to end our life while another day we are convinced that it is worth while going on with our world journey. Obviously a mental state which produces this unevenness of outlook is not to be trusted.

The reason why at times we are prepared to take our lives may be summarised under two headings. Firstly under heavy mental strain and secondly for worldly or physical reasons. To take life under the stress of mental depression is absurd, providing we are reasonably normal when we do it. In the battle of life we are all human beings striving to conduct our lives within the letter of the law. There are many perhaps who strive to live strictly according to some creed or doctrine.

In the course of the battle all the human weaknesses are met. Betrayal of friendships, faithlessness, untruthfulness are only a few in a long list of unpleasant failings which beset not only others but you and I.

To the extent to which we can withstand these ubiquitous spear thrusts our characters are tested and principles are forged which provide us with the necessary endurance to go about our daily tasks. To go down in front of them and yield the path to others pressing behind who possess more courage and determination qualifies us for the suicide's grave. It might even be reasonably argued that such is the laggard's deserved fate. It is the line of least resistance and an admission that our mental system has not been suitably developed to enable us to take our place in life's game. We were quite agreeable to the rules of the game when we were on the crest of a wave but not when we sprung a leak.

Under the second heading I would place those who take their lives for worldly reasons when in full possession of their reasoning faculties. Such reason might be a sudden change in monetary conditions or intense physical suffering. Only last week a woman who I knew saw fit to take her life because of financial changes in her life. Accustomed to live in luxury she found it unpleasant to live in comparative poverty. It was not a case of sheer want.

A social system built upon competition could not permit such an easy way out of life of indulgence and improvidence. If it were encouraged the virtues which we regard as some of the best in character building such as thrift, self-control unselfishness and service for others would give way to the theory of a short life and a merry one with a suicide's grave and no consideration for those left behind.

You do not benefit mankind by dying for it but by living for it—mainly in service to others. If the State should ever decide that we are over-populated a competent committee will select those who must be removed before Father Time comes with his scythe. We do not want to make each man his own judge. If we did we might all think our duty was to pass out leaving an untenanted world.

TELEPHONE

By ANNE ORCHARD

IT was just an ordinary telephone, perhaps a little more dilapidated than most owing to the constant use to which it was put, but Jane couldn't have told you, or herself for that matter, of anything at that moment which she prized more highly. She tried in vain to switch her mind off it. She strained to think of a new plot for her story, but the story didn't interest her; or rather, it interested her but just then the telephone interested her more. She tried to fancy herself elsewhere, enjoying imaginary trips to the places she knew and loved. She tried to visualise an Utopian land where she would always be with the one person who mattered to her, always with the one person whom she loved, a land where there would be no need for telephones—there she was again, she thought miserably, her thoughts centred on the telephone. If it rings suddenly, she thought, I shall probably jump. I must remember not to, she thought, it would be too silly to jump because the telephone rings, when that's the one thing I want it to do.

Of course it was her fault; she should have suggested something more satisfactory than a casual ring on the telephone, but someone had once told her—she couldn't remember who it was—that it was by far the best plan to be casual with men and never to let them realise that you wanted, sometimes desperately, to see them again. She wondered if she had been too casual. After all, why should a man want to see her again, especially if he thought that she didn't mind very much about him. Perhaps if she had given him an indication that she would like to see him again it would have encouraged him. She could easily have said, "Come round and have supper with me one night." Surely that wouldn't have seemed too forward, and it would have given him the opportunity of meeting her again without his having to make the initial effort. Perhaps he didn't want to appear too keen—he might have funny ideas about women, and have persuaded himself that she would be offended if he took her at her word and just 'phoned her up. Oh God, why hadn't she asked him to supper?

But then, she couldn't really have made the first move—surely men like to do their hunting themselves. After all the male was supposed to hunt the female, not the other way round, though put like that it didn't sound quite nice, but she seemed to have read a great deal in the press lately about feminists (she wasn't quite sure what a feminist was) and how woman was really the inspiration behind the man and how all the inspiration was won by subtle suggestions, and that if women really wanted anything they always got it, provided they wanted it badly enough. She wanted him badly enough, so that didn't seem to work; but perhaps the people who wrote these articles didn't really feel the things they wrote but just wrote them to fill a column or so.

There had been that other article though that said that a man never proposed. It was all done by the woman. She had to lend a helping hand before he could find enough pluck to venture his suit. Yes, but she was alright there, she had given him a helping hand; she had asked him to ring her sometime, had casually told him that her number was in the telephone book, under her own name. How awful if he had forgotten her name! That was it, of course, how stupid of her not to think of it before, why the whole explanation was that he had lost the slip of paper with her number, and now although he was longing to get into touch with her, he had lost her number and forgotten that she had told him it was in the book. What a pity she couldn't ring up all the exchanges to tell them confidentially that if a man did ring up, asking for her, would they. . . . But now she was being silly, of course; how could he ask for her if he didn't know her name?

She stroked the dilapidated old telephone. "Couldn't

you ring. . . . even once. . . ." She shook herself, angrily. She was getting childish; the best thing she could do was to go out and get herself some supper; perhaps go to a cinema, that would take her mind off the telephone. "I couldn't," she murmured aloud, "I should hear you ringing the whole time," and she pushed it away from her, impatiently.

Suppose he was dialling the number now, then the bell would be ringing in about half-a-minute. She waited, holding her breath, her whole body tense with excitement, but the half minute passed and the telephone was silent.

It was strange how silent a thing could be; how nice if she could be as quiet as that; just sitting placidly with her thoughts at rest and not wandering about like this. It was so hopelessly tiring when your thoughts went racing all round and round and never stopping; much more tiring than going for a ten mile walk, or running, or playing tennis or any of those things. How lovely just to sit quietly and feel nothing until somebody came in and jerked you from your seat. After all you would feel strongly enough then. Life would pulsate through you. She had never thought of that before; never thought of the tremendous amount of life that a telephone felt. Whispered conversations which were tantamount to big business deals; disjointed sentences which might put men in prison for the duration of their lives, or even hang them; conversations which some people would pay thousands and thousands of pounds to hear, the telephone heard for nothing.

And love. The telephone must get far more than its share of love. She would like to be a telephone and get as much love as that. Especially at night. Conversations had a way of becoming more tender, more spiritual at night. She was sure lovers must say lovely tender things to each other at night. She would love to lie in bed and talk to her lover over the telephone. She could say the most wonderful things, things she didn't feel she would ever say during the day, and then if she suddenly felt she had said too much, if she felt embarrassed, she could just ring off. It would be beautiful, thought Jane, to say something very wonderful to your lover, and then just ring off. It would lift the whole thing on to a higher plane, in some inexplicable way. She didn't quite know why, but it seemed to her at that moment that she would rather talk to her lover over the telephone than have him beside her. She supposed she was prudish, or chaste. She wasn't sure. But supposing he did ring up, she didn't know him well enough to say lovely things to him. I wonder what he would do, she thought, if I told him how much I love him, if I asked him to ring me up every evening, when I have got into bed, and make love to me like that? She supposed she was being a little obscene now, but words, beautiful words, had a strange way of affecting her, even more than a caress, she thought.

How awful if he did come and then she was tongue-tied; if she couldn't say the things she had so often dreamed of saying. Supposing even, that he was really rather prosaic and wouldn't want her to say them. Supposing he didn't say them to her. God, she thought, this is awful, but I couldn't bear him to sit here and she stroked the sofa beside her, and listen to him say something about the weather. She looked about the room, with its lovely soft lighting which seemed wasted without someone to make love in its soft, dim radiance. Supposing, and she shuddered, supposing he did come and then talked about nothing except the weather, or something worse, like a football match, or . . .

She slowly took the receiver off, and her finger stroked the old telephone. She waited for the exchange to answer.

"Will you cut me off to-night," she said, "I don't want to be disturbed."

VERSE

CEDARS

By V. V. PETITT

THE Cedar trees were chisled out
By God,
And flung
Deliberately,
Against the sky
At dawn;
And all the world was silent,
For no man
Dared to lift up his hand
And vie with God.

REINCARNATION

By M. PARDOE

WAS it yesternight, or a thousand years ago
We met? And where the southern cross hung
low
In dream veiled skies,
Suddenly and swiftly knew
That each was each?
Laughter and lilt of song—sorrow—
And we together amid the jostling throng,
Only our eyes met, and across the sea of faces,
Strangely alone, we knew—
Was it yesternight?

Was it a dream? Or in dim days forgotten
You came again,
Across the years and time.
Like sea wrack flung aside on shores forsaken
We met—
Do you remember, where behind long ridges
Of wind blown sand the city,
Vast, and rank with wild things growing,
Lay—and a wet wind blowing
Stirred the long grass.
Only we two—and a dead world together,
Your lips close pressed to mine—then solitude,
And the long years again.

STAGES

By E. H. V.

FIRST was the Unconscious,
Abysmal deep:
Whence form arose, the Conscious:
A god in sleep
Now wakes, now dreams, self-conscious
Dreams grand and grim
Until the Super-Conscious
Awaken him.

COMRADES

By D. M. SCOTT

IN blue summer's eve we came to a gate,
And clutched the top bar wearily.
You said "Let's walk to the sea
Through a thousand miles of woods
And trees like these."
And each of us felt clean of heart,
Close knit and strong,
And while you spoke you crushed
Two flowers in your hand,
And gazed into the sun.

CONSCIOUSNESS

By SETON PEACEY

WHY blame the wind that I am cold,
Or why the rain that I am wet,
Or why my coat, so worn and old,
That wind and rain my body fret?

The door of that dark house is shut
And on the cracked and blistered paint
Both wind and rain their fingers put,
Yet the dark door makes no complaint.

I am not patient—as are things;
Nor of discomfort, tolerant,
For in my heart, undying, springs
The soaring fount of discontent.

Things die; but I shall live and live
Using all things inanimate
To travel space, a fugitive
From cumbered death's decayed estate.

LAMENT FOR LIFE

By JAMES STERN

MAN! I shall die! It is too much for me!
Look into this bud, born at sight of Spring;
Part the petals; and you shall see
How a human sun caused my heart to sing.
Man! Do not lie! Never have you seen
Beauty in the lovely light of day!
All your nights dreaming you have been
Of old memories that slowly fade away.
Man! We are one! Midnight and morn.
We end the evening, we two; alone
We no longer live; our creation is the dawn,
To which all my sins are striving to atone.
In life, nought is free. We must pay—for rest;
And in Peace lies Love, the Crown, the costliest.

OPPORTUNITY

By J. D. O.

WHAT ample time the ploughman has for thought,
To ponder many things!
This life; the days that constitute his span;
The seasons sliding round.
And yet, I wonder if he's wiser than
The worker in a town,
Or if he merely ploughs, and thinks of nought.

STORY

MR. TURVEY CATCHES THE 10.17

By E. D. MARTELL

EVERY business day for thirty-one years Mr. Turvey had caught the 10.17. He had graduated to it at the age of thirty after passing through the preliminary stages of the 7.25 at nineteen, the 8.18 at twenty-two and the 9.5 at twenty-seven. From that proud day when, his own master at last, he had dawdled over breakfast, wandered slowly to the station, exchanged his third-class season ticket for one entitling him to first-class honours, and nonchalantly waited for a porter to open the carriage door, he had never looked back. Not once in all those years had it been necessary for him to catch an earlier train. The 10.17 suited his purpose so exactly that one was tempted to believe the railway company ran it especially for his benefit, as, indeed, he believed they did.

Mr. Turvey and the 10.17 were, in fact, more than daily companions, they were loyal friends. It was their proud boast that they had never failed each other. Mr. Turvey was always to time, carrying his neatly folded copy of *The Morning Post* and his neatly rolled umbrella. He never had to run, he was never hot and flurried, and his ticket was always ready for inspection, though rarely was its production necessary. The 10.17 was just as precise in keeping the other side of the bargain. It was never late and it never started before time. Even during the difficult days of the General Strike it had run as usual, to Mr. Turvey's unconcealable delight and admiration.

He had come to regard it during the years as a faithful friend in which he could put his trust. He was never tired of working out the number of miles he and the 10.17 had travelled together, or how many hours they had spent in one another's company. He was proud that during their long acquaintance, it had never been necessary for one to wait for the other.

There had been, it was true, one dreadful occasion when the compact seemed likely to be broken. Fog, a deep, noiseless immovable fog had bound the earth, and Mr. Turvey, coughing and worried, had found it almost impossible to make his way stationwards. But a life's record was at stake and he had hurried forward through strange places, people and lamp-posts looming suddenly before him and as quickly disappearing as though they had never materialised. The turn to the station, which he had taken a thousand times without a moment's thought, now became a thing of overwhelming importance in his life. Not once in a dozen years had he even considered exactly where the brick wall became a sharp right-angle, automatically changing the course of his footsteps. In the fog the wall seemed never-ending, running on, brick after brick, as if it circled the world. When at last the sequence ended and the corner appeared Mr. Turvey clung to it a moment as if he was afraid it would straighten out and run on through the fog for ever. Guilty in conscience and heated through his battle, he stumbled into the station and could have cried for joy as the 10.17 steamed slowly in at exactly the same moment.

Mr. Turvey and the 10.17 were not the only ones who were proud of the long friendship. The station-master and his men knew of it and shared in the glory. No ticket-collector could consider himself fully fledged until Mr. Turvey ceased to produce his season ticket and greeted him with a smile as if to say, "No need for further formalities, we know each other now." Young porters, descendants of he who had first opened the carriage door, vied with each other in assisting Mr. Turvey to his corner. A long succession of guards

never dreamed of signalling the right-away until they had assured themselves of Mr. Turvey's presence.

And so the years slipped by. Edward VII died and George V reigned in his stead. The Great War began and ran its course. Governments came and went. Great men arose and died. And through it all Mr. Turvey caught the 10.17 to town every morning and each day added one more journey to his record.

It was one spring morning that the record was nearly broken. A fresh, glorious morning, with the last traces of the dawn's mist still on the trees and a pleasant snap in the air which promised better things to come. It was such mornings that Mr. Turvey revelled in. The coolness of the air on his face and the gleam of the sun in his eyes were a perpetual delight to him. He loved the Spring, and his daily walk to the station through its beauties, was for him the best part of the day.

But on this particular morning the station-master was worried, for Mr. Turvey was late. As the 10.17 ran in more than one pair of eyes turned to the booking hall through which passengers approached the up platform. It was strange that Mr. Turvey was not there.

The station-master and the guard met in the centre of the platform.

"First time in the eleven years I've been here that he's been late," said the station-master, looking at his watch.

"Must be ill," remarked the guard, "he couldn't be just late."

The 10.17 should have been away five minutes ago. The two officials debated whether loyalty to Mr. Turvey or strict adherence to the company's regulations was the way of duty. Sentiment is stronger than Head Office and Mr. Turvey was granted a further two minutes' grace—a decision he rewarded by appearing suddenly round the corner of the booking office and hurrying on to the platform.

Every porter on the station was eager to open the door of his carriage, but for once he ignored them all and sank back in a corner without a word of explanation or apology. It was noticeable that he carried neither his umbrella nor neatly folded newspaper.

As the 10.17 glided swiftly away intent on making up lost time the station-master stood for a moment and watched it. "Now I wonder what's worrying the old boy," he remarked to the foreman, "something's upset him."

He knew almost immediately. The foreman, who had crossed to the yard to speak to a returning delivery man, came back with a puzzled look on his face.

"Here! What do you make of this?" he demanded. "Swayne says old Turvey died a quarter of an hour ago, 10.17 to be exact. . . ."

Next Week's SATURDAY REVIEW will contain:—

The Future of Liberalism. By An Orthodox Liberal.
(This is the fourth of our series of independent political statements.)

An Imaginary Adventure of Mr. Pickwick. By Richard Clavering.

Britain's Mystery Explorer?

Argument: Are Best-Sellers Necessarily Bad?

FILMS BY MARK FORREST

The Cheat. Directed by George Abbott, The Carlton.

Frail Women. Directed by Maurice Elvey. The Leicester Square.

West Front 1918. Directed by G. W. Pabst. The Academy.

"THE CHEAT," which is the third film which Tallulah Bankhead has made with the Paramount company, has already served as a vehicle, in the days of the silent pictures, for two other leading actresses; yet the story is not one which should be singled out for such distinction. Good melodrama is as difficult a thing to write as good comedy—they both generally get out of hand—and this story of a woman who "milks" the milk fund, takes the money to repay the deficiency from a European with oriental ideas, evades the "due and forfeit of her bond" by shooting him and is acquitted of her death in an incredible trial scene, abounds in touches which produce laughter instead of tears. Tallulah Bankhead gives her best performance as yet, but her acting still leaves a lot to be desired, and its poverty makes an unconvincing plot the more unconvincing. I cannot add my voice to the chorus of praise about this actress, any more than I can applaud Greta Garbo in her latest picture, which is a screen adaptation of "The Rise and Fall of Susan Lennox." The latter is as far from the character of Susan Lennox as she was from that of Cavallini in "Romance"; and that was nearly a continent away.

In contrast to the performances of these two actresses there is a much sounder piece of acting in "Frail Women" at the Leicester Square where Mary Newcomb, whose work on the stage has always been distinctive, makes here first appearance in talking pictures. She invests the character of a nice woman gone to the bad with the right touches and, skilfully directed and given a reasonable story, here seems to be a new actress for the British films—heaven knows they need them!

It is difficult, however, to become enthusiastic about her present picture because the tawdry plot is unfolded so obviously that one's interest begins to wane almost at once. Apart from Mary Newcomb, Edmund Gwenn again gives a sound portrayal of the common man with a heart of gold—this time a bookmaker—and it seems a pity that his only reward should be the sight of his mistress with her head in a gas oven. This ending is the only unexpected thing about the picture.

From these unpleasant and unreal films, it is a relief to turn to Mr. Pabst's "West Front 1918." This is unpleasant enough, but it is not untrue. Here is war as undergone by the German infantry man; it is without beauty and without glamour. A filthy business which degrades the participants, but there is sincerity and truth.

So far as Mr. Pabst's direction is concerned, this picture is not the brilliant achievement which "Kameradschaft" is, but, if the work of the Russians is omitted, it dwarfs nearly everything else. The cutting is very fine and one or two sequences are as dramatic in their intensity as any in Mr. Pabst's later work. Finally the acting bears the stamp of veracity; just such men as these were opposed to us and they married or had transitory affairs with just such women. There are no offerings here on the altar of fancy. Mr. Pabst is only concerned with what was and, if anyone dislikes it, his dislike cannot flow from impatience at being misled. It is interesting to compare this film, whose German dialogue has been supplemented with English sub-titles, with Mr. Milestone's "All Quiet on the Western Front"; the latter displayed the American method at its best. No doubt it is the more popular picture, but those who go to see "West Front 1918" will remember it long after they have forgotten the other.

THEATRE BY GILBERT WAKEFIELD

Rough., to Moderate. By Wilfred Eyre. Embassy Theatre.

AND so the charming little Embassy Theatre at Swiss Cottage, which for a year or two past has been run as a repertory theatre by Reandco of the St. Martin's, is to "go talkie" . . .

I find I have used, instinctively, a term of contempt and ill-concealed superiority—as who should say "go native"—to describe the impending change of entertainment.

"And quite right too!" you are probably exclaiming. Yet I wonder! . . . Yes, quite seriously I cannot pass that phrase, with all its implications, without first answering the challenge which something—call it, if you like, my conscience—whispers disconcertingly within me.

Note this, to begin with. Eleven thousand persons have paid half-a-crown (I think it was) to become members of the Embassy Playgoers Association, with the privilege of buying tickets at reduced prices and also of attending special productions given on Sunday evenings. The prices of seats, for members, last September ranged between six-and-sixpence for the front stalls down to one-and-tenpence for a comfortable seat in a not-too-far-off pit. In October these prices were reduced, and the most expensive seats since then have been as cheap as three-and-sixpence. New plays have been presented every fortnight. I repeat that eleven thousand persons joined this Playgoers Association; and I have very little doubt that the great majority of them are even now loudly deploring the impending disappearance of their theatre, and thinking of its transformation into a picture-palace with moral indignation and artistic scorn.

Yet—and this is the point—with all these thousands of presumably keen and loyal playgoers associated with it; with a theatre more comfortable than many of the West End playhouses; with prices as low as those prevailing in the cheaper cinemas, and much lower than in several of the larger and more luxurious, the enterprise has failed—not because it was badly run or economically mismanaged, but simply because the vast majority of those "keen" and "loyal" playgoers proved their keenness and their loyalty by persistently refusing to attend its productions. At the best only a quarter, at the much more frequent worst a tenth, of those eleven thousand members went to see the plays presented at their theatre.

Now, why did they join? And why, having joined, did they not go to see the subsequent productions? I can only guess, of course; but what I fancy happened in the case of the majority of those eleven thousand, is that they went to the Embassy one evening, found themselves "quite enjoying" the play—and nearly everybody does in fact "quite enjoy" almost every play he goes to—discovered in one of the intervals the existence of the Playgoers Association, realized the economic advantages of membership, and in a moment of mild but genuine enthusiasm paid the half-crown necessary to join it.

But although, as I have said, the ordinary uncritical playgoer "quite enjoys" almost every play he sees, his enjoyment as a rule is temporary; and except when the play has been superlatively interesting or exciting, his enthusiasm has vanished within twenty-four hours. Now, the Embassy productions have been more or less consistently well done, and the plays presented there have been on the whole by no means bad or dull or silly; what they have seldom, if ever, been is so exceptionally

good or interesting or clever as to live in the memory as so enjoyable as to fill a person with an irresistible, or even very strong, desire to see the next production. I myself have "quite enjoyed" a number of evenings spent there during the pass year or two. I have never journeyed to Swiss Cottage with reluctance, with the expectation of a tedious evening, or indeed without hope of witnessing a fairly good play, competently acted, in a pleasant little theatre. And very seldom have my hopes been disappointed. But—and this is the only important question—have I ever, during the whole course of its existence, seen a play which gave me exquisite delight or that tremendous satisfaction which alone would justify the shedding of warm tears at the thought of its impending transformation to a picture-palace? I am afraid the truthful answer is: I haven't! And if I widen the enquiry, and examine the more recent records of the West End theatres, can I truthfully say, or even coax myself into asserting, that their "going talkie" would be shocking and deplorable?

Well, it is easy enough to despise and ridicule the talkies. It is hard very often not to hate them with the hatred of a fanatic. There are moments when I personally would vote enthusiastically for the indiscriminate suppression of the cinema. As an old-fashioned theatre-goer, I am frequently appalled by its vulgarity, and almost frightened by its power and popularity. And yet . . . Well, I haven't the space now to discuss the question, nor have I (nor, so far as I'm aware, has anybody else) as yet examined it with sufficient thoroughness to warrant a considered judgment.

And so for the moment I confine myself to admitting, with reluctance, my suspicion that the contemporary Drama is not so incomparably superior, either intellectually, to the contemporary Cinema, as to warrant the wearing of deep mourning when a theatre becomes a talkie-palace; a suspicion derived from the fact that as good a comedy as I have seen for a long time is a film called "Service for Ladies," and as good a drama is a film called "Front Page"; and that my more serious-minded, intellectual and artistic friends have not urged me to see any acted play with anything like the persistence and enthusiasm with which they urged me to see an (as I thought, overrated) French film called "Le Million."

But I'm forgetting "Rough to Moderate," with regard to which critical judgment has been made particularly difficult by the fact that the two leading parts (and the play is largely a duologue) have been about as hopelessly miscast as possible. It tells, in a series of short scenes, how Mr. Duckworth, a successful and highly-paid gossip-writer, succumbs to the wiles of an American gold-digger, and is induced to accompany her from Paris to London; how during the journey they discover the essential truths about each other; how when at last they arrive in London, they detest one another; and how eventually Mrs. Duckworth arrives to rescue her husband from his embarrassment. It is, however, almost impossible to appreciate the situations of the comedy, because no actress ever looked less a gold-digger than Miss Olive Blakeney, and no actor less like a human gold-mine than Mr. Jack Melford. Apart from her lines, Miss Blakeney was quite obviously respectable and good and kind, and would certainly never have taken as much as a penny from Miles Duckworth—who as embodied by Mr. Melford, could ill have afforded to lend her one, much less to take her shopping, squander bottles of champagne on her, and generally play the sugar-daddy to this woman of recklessly extravagant habits. The play was consequently wholly unconvincing in the theatre; but I detected some good lines, and some amusing situations. Mr. Cecil Parker and Miss Joyce Bland were more happily cast (in respect of quality, though not of quantity), and gave their usual sound and satisfactory performances.

CORRESPONDENCE

DRINKS AFTER TEN P.M.

SIR,—The proposal of the Licensing Commission for uniform closing of public houses at ten p.m. completely ignores the differences between the needs of rural areas and London and other large towns and pleasure resorts. It also ignores the popular demand for facilities to obtain alcoholic drinks after theatres are over. It is unfair to make people buy a meal who are not hungry and only require to quench their thirst.

Hove.

R. G. FIFE.

COMMUNISM

SIR,—W. D. Watson's article entitled "Communism" is sheer nonsense. It is no nearer Communism than the Devil is to Heaven. It is "Bolshevism run mad!" He obviously does not know his subject because he refutes religion and yet the whole communistic teachings are based on the teachings of Christ.

Communism stands for a perfect people in a perfect land; unfortunately unattainable for centuries, as we who are not perfect cannot educate our children to such a high ideal. We can however do the next best thing, our best for our neighbours, rich or poor, and education will eventually do the rest. Goodness of character will become more important than knowledge and life will automatically become communal.

E.4.

GEO. W. MARTIN

SIR,—I am neither impressed nor depressed by Mr. Watson's preposterous picture of a British Soviet Millennium, and those who want any further illustrations of unbridled wildness can find more than they wish to see in the madhouses and menageries of this afflicted country. We most of us knew "what Communism stands for," and we also know what, in less tolerant times, its advocates and exponents would have "stood"—and rightly "stood"—for. We, the intended victims of the proposed villainy for which Communism stands, are apparently to be left with no more than our feet to "stand" on, and that doubtless only because they are not transferable.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

AJAX.

SIR,—In his excellent novel "The Golden Plough," Mr. Oswald Harland gives an amusing but nevertheless apt definition of Communism, i.e., "Communist—one that communes with another man's ox, ass, brass, goods, chattels and wife. A sharer in all things of all men. A believer in a real community that ain't just a menagerie. A thinker is a communist—a bloke who's got a corner in ideas, a blue aura, and any amount of damn cheek."

"You'd want to share my wife would you if I were married?"

"Aye. If you had a good taste. That's being a practised Communist. I'd share your wife with you alright."

Brixton, S.W.

A. F. ARNOLD.

THE QUOTA

SIR,—It is interesting and amusing to find the more Conservative supporters of the National Government resenting its adoption of Dr. Addison's wheat quota proposals because these are socialism and ultimately mean the nationalisation of our milling industry. But surely a Government by three parties, serving under a Socialist Prime Minister who has just sent an eminent conscientious objector to the Lords, can fairly include in its programme points from each party? If safeguarding from the Conservatives, why not the wheat quota from Labour?

JAMES SEXTON

CYPRUS

SIR,—Five-sixths of the inhabitants of Cyprus are Greek and have been so for 4,000 years; the claim of the Cypriots to union with Greece is as good as the claim of the Isle of Wight to union with England. Cyprus was occupied by Lord Beaconsfield's Government in 1878 without the consent of the inhabitants—was (again without their consent) annexed in 1914; if Cyprus had not been in English occupation it would have been reunited to Greece in 1913. The island has for us no strategic value, unless we propose to use it as a base for operations against the French in Syria: if its ports were needed, which they are not, for the Fleet, their free use could be had, exactly as the use of Cretan ports is already had. Although taxation is high, the island is not self-supporting and costs us, if we may believe newspaper reports, about £900,000 a year.

What do we gain by holding the island against the legitimate wishes of the inhabitants? Anyone who has travelled in Greece knows that under the modern Greek Government the island would be efficiently administered, and if we are to think of the Moslem minority, I would point out that Greece is the one country in South-Eastern Europe where there is no persecution of minorities. Greece is to this country sincerely friendly and more grateful than some who owe us more. Why, for no reason whatever, antagonise a friendly nation and run the risk of finding some day a Cypriot "Sinn-Fein" on our hands? What is the sense of it?

Bury.

L. R. STRANGEWAYS.

"THE LEAGUE IN THE DOLDRUMS."

SIR,—Whatever good work socially, and even politically, has been achieved by the League of Nations, no lasting or dynamic peace can come from a machinery which is applied to symptoms rather than causes, is creaking and uncertain in action, and has not a vigorous and universal public opinion as its motive power. No other world leadership has ever been visualised so radical and satisfying in its approach to world problems as that of which it is said: "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

Ideal it may be; but every step in international life to-day makes it clearer that human government is reaching an impasse.

Yeovil.

L. G. SARGENT.

ATHEISM

SIR,—I sympathise with Lady Simons effort to deal with the points about this subject in small space, yet her reference to the "primrose path to theistic revelation" made me gasp with astonishment, and involuntarily I invoked the shades of Jeroboam II and his friend the priest Amaziah. But may I state what I honestly believe to be objective facts?

I regard the B Minor Mass (which I like) and Ravel's Mother Goose Suite (which I dislike) as revelation: whilst I regard the music of "Mister Cinders" (which I like) and of "Swanee" (which I dislike) as non-revelational.

I think I see Mr. Hurst's point and I agree.

S. TETLEY

SIR,—Mr. Tilney, in your issue of January 2, assumes in his letter that Modernism means the same thing when applied to Religion as it does in Art. He says that what is good . . . in modern Art is as old as the hills. Every Modernist will agree that this is equally true of Religion. The modern churchman is a Reformer, not a Revolutionary. Surely every true artist WILL agree that art which is imitative and inspired by past achievements becomes sterile and conventional? The life given by the spirit (inspiration) is killed by the letter (imitation).

Oxford.

ERNEST S. THOMAS.

In his letter published under the title "The Ancient World" in our last issue, Mr. A. B. Sayce, through a misprint, referred to the "Amerform texts." This should, of course have read "Cuneiform texts."

REVIEWS

Reminiscences of an Irish Priest. By Canon A. B. R. Young. Dundalgan Press Dundalk.

CANON YOUNG is not a Father O'Flynn but a venerable High Church clergyman of the Church of Ireland as it was before its Disestablishment. He has, indeed, a humorous and sometimes tragic story to tell. His charm is that of a living writer who remembers clearly what few others can be alive to recall. He was born the son of a famous surgeon in Monaghan, and remembers the troubles of Forty-Eight. The Monaghan Young Irishlanders were led by Gavan Duffy, who became an Australian Premier and a Knight of St. Michael and St. George, and by Tom Reilly, who was once hidden from the police under a beautiful Kashmir shawl presented by Queen Victoria to Lady Cremorne, a county lady who had been Maid of Honour to the Queen. Canon Young believed that the hiding rebel was his mother lying on the sofa until he saw a man emerge from the royal shawl and thence escape to America. He remembered the General Election of 1851 and some public executions in the same year. His nursemaid led him to see an enormous densely packed crowd as silent as a windless night, all gazing up at the old gallows in front of the County goal with its gruesome lictors rods, and skull and crossed bones, and dangling beneath these the bodies of two fellow men!

In those days men were still hung for felony and to avoid Capital sentence, a County Monaghan Jury convicted a prisoner who had stolen a pair of leathern breeches of manslaughter. Some of these anomalies remained on the Statute Book, and the first Catholic Judge who came to Monaghan found himself in the ridiculous position of having to condemn a man to death for the high crime of sterilising a goat! In 1853 Canon Young met John Duffy, who was 120 years old, so that in this year of grace he can boast that he saw a man who was born two hundred years ago in the reign of the First King George. In the same year, 1853, Canon Young was present in the first passenger train to cross the Boyne Viaduct, whereat ladies finding themselves suspended at such a terrifying height fainted clean away. While he was a schoolboy he recalled his brother getting gazetted to the Crimea before he was sixteen years old, having played a trick on the Rector of Monaghan to get the certificate of the legal age.

Most readers have heard of the Beresford Ghost story, but the appearance of Archbishop Beresford at a seance in the Sixties will be new to most. Drogheda was much intrigued over two appointments pending, one to a Vicarage and one for a Medical Officer. Canon Young sat opposite the medium. The spirit informed them by rapping that neither of the expected candidates would be selected, and more remarkably gave the name of the new Vicar as Edward Gore Kelly:

"No one present had ever heard of such a cleric and some one was directed to go and borrow the Clerical Directory which, on being examined, showed no such name at all amongst the Irish clergy! In a tone more of jest than anything else the question was put: Who is the spirit that is present? To this immediately came the reply, John George Beresford. "Is it the Primate?" was asked, and at once the reply, "Yes," was snapped out. Now that very day it was stated in the papers that the Primate, who had been ill, had recovered and would resume his duties immediately. Accordingly the question, Is he dead? was put and emphatically answered in the affirmative. Not satisfied even yet, the questioner put the very gruesome words, Is his body cold? When No was given with great deliberation. . . . Next morning there appeared the announcement that the Primate had passed away rather unexpectedly and on enquiry it turned out that his death actually took place

while or immediately before we were assembled that night. And very soon afterwards the patron of St. Peter's conferred the living on the Rev. E. G. Kelly, an English cleric."

Later he promised his father that he would never attend a seance again. But his family seemed like many Irish ones to have a touch of the second sight. His soldier brother had an amazing trip in the Indian jungle while convoying specie. After shooting dead a naked man with a knife in each hand and a well-oiled body, he was surprised to see the Adjutant standing at the entrance to his tent. The camp was searched in vain for the Adjutant who had died of cholera at the hour he had been seen.

Stories of the older type of Irish clergyman are pleasant though almost incredible such as "Skip-the-Litany Pratt" incumbent of Donagh for the first half of the century. He used to whisper to the deaf Clerk to skip the Litany, and when he was unheard used to check the erring Clerk with "Damn you, didn't I say skip the Litany?" On other Sundays there used to be open arguments in Church between Vicar and Clerk as to the exact day of the month before giving out the Psalms. An appeal to Canon Young's aunt in the front pew was always accepted as final. Canon Young was sent to school at Drogheda, where the Duke of Wellington had cut his initials as a schoolboy and next to which other boys proudly cut theirs. On returning to his school Canon Young found "the glorious seventeenth century oak panelling was painted a pale green and all the initials were filled up with putty!" Later he was sent to Ennis College in the West. Beyond Limerick Junction the train stopped in order that the guard might read the *Freeman's Journal* to the natives. This must be the origin of the famous story in *Punch*.

Canon Young was appointed to Ballybay, which had known a very eccentric clergyman, a Rev. Henry St. George, who was never transferred to a new Curacy without raising and re-interring his wife and his whole family, whom he took in coffins with him. They were buried successively in Ballybay, Tydavnet and Dromore! Canon Young's adventures in holding High Church principles in an Irish Parish seem to have left a sting in an otherwise very forgiving and buoyant nature. English Anglo-Catholics will read these pages with admiration and interest, how he was assailed with dead rats and anonymously attacked, while his Bishop made every effort to starve him out. The climax came when 250 Orangemen armed with bludgeons attempted to capture him during divine service. Their plans were overheard by a deaf woman, who the Canon believes received back her hearing miraculously in order to forestall the outrage. The local R.M. was concealed with an armed force during service with the result that, "as I gave out my text the sign was given and the worshippers who filled the nave rose, but as they did so the police also rose with their rifles in their hands and faced the angry crowd." Even the election of a Bishop of Clogher in the Eighties has a mediæval ring about it. When the voting was close between the Bishop's Commissioner and the Dean, the majority for the former "was secured by the door of the Synod Hall being shut and locked in the face of two of the clergy, both former Curates of the Dean."

The most astounding chapter describes the Grays of Ballybay. Their family history was worthy of a novel. There was the formidable Sam Gray who collected tithes for the clergy and was credited with seven murders. While one of his clerical patrons lay dead he appeared with a will in his own favour, which he stuffed into the dead man's mouth in order that his henchmen could swear to "the last words that came out of the mouth of the deceased." When a schoolmaster produced the real will Sam Gray murdered him. Not only did he order an employee of his own to betray him for the sake of the reward but he cheated the gallows on a Writ of Error. Meantime his son James arrived at the gaol in a fine carriage under the guise of the Lord Lieutenant's doctor

with an order to examine and release the prisoner if his health seemed impaired. James was sent to Botany Bay for the forgery but returned after a fine political career in Tasmania. Canon Young found him a parishioner and records his proud epitaph in Ballybay Churchyard ending—

"His position as Director of Roads made him a Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council with the title of the Right Honourable."

Another Gray bred the famous Greyhound Blue Hat, nor were the women of the family behindhand, for Rachel became post-mistress and married a penniless dragoon named Bouverie, whom she proved to be heir of De la Pre Abbey in Northampton and with the help of a Monaghan lawyer secured the estate after a *cause celebre*. Canon Young visited them both at the Abbey in 1881. What has happened to the Grays of Ballybay? They were the Capones of Ulster. Their last shooting was at Castleblayney Station in the Election of 1871 when Edward Gray was "tried for the murder but honourably acquitted."

We have read this book with wonder and amusement. Although it is strictly local and Diocesan history, it contains anecdotes and memories which only need to be told by a good teller to produce that splendid aroma which is one of the three joys of Irish story telling. Incidentally the Canon praises the *Reminiscences* of an Irish R.M. as not in the least exaggerated. His own are often as good.

SHANE LESLIE.

JOHN DRYDEN

The Dramatic Works of John Dryden. Six vols. £7 17s. 6d. the set. (First two volumes now published). Nonesuch Press.

THESE noble volumes which are printed and bound with the splendid simplicity of great art, will, when the series of six is complete, contain all the theatrical pieces of John Dryden; the first in time, though certainly not the first in reputation, of the half-dozen or so wits and men of the world who are now remembered as the Restoration Dramatists. One turns these orderly and beautiful pages, reading a speech here and a stage direction there, conscious that the writing is always that of the competent craftsman and never rises to the height of genius; and as one turns one wonders, not indeed whether the editorial and typographical work was worth while, but whether it could not have been better spent on some more worthy object? This is a printer's resurrection or exhumation, not a natural selection or survival; and as one lays the book aside the strange and baffling question forces itself forward, what actual quality is it, apart from accidents of place and time, that makes for literary immortality?

Why do we read Dryden's verse and ignore his dramas? Why quote Collins and sneer at Shenstone? What makes Young's "Night Thoughts" tolerable at least in certain moods and in small doses, whereas Blair's "Grave" (a poem on the same melancholy subject), is weariness even to the conscientious student? Why do we increasingly neglect Cowper and Crabbe, and cut down Wordsworth's thousand or so pages to a bare twenty or thirty? Why is Tennyson coming back over the literary horizon, and Browning slowly but quite definitely receding? Why does the cheery Meredith date, whereas the sombre Hardy does not? Why is Oscar Wilde still readable and playable, whereas Stephen Phillips is sunk without trace? (This last is literally true. I unearthed a complete set of the Phillips' dramas in a second-hand bookseller's basement two or three years ago, and bought the lot for a shilling—his valuation, not mine).

So far as Phillips is concerned, of course, the answer is easy. The genuine goods were simply not in the shop-window or on the counter or the shelves, and the wonder is not that he is now forgotten but that he was ever

famous. (But Beerbolm Tree and, I suppose, the critics and reviewers as usual, have a lot to answer for; perhaps there is a special purgatory in the next world for those who have discovered sham masterpieces in this).

But the other cases are puzzling, and it is no answer to say that the popular taste is always wrong. With Blair it certainly was; but Tennyson and Browning? Posterity seems to be coming back to the view that Tennyson is too good to be true (in a slightly different sense than the Victorians would have used the phrase) but at any rate exquisite if a trifle superficial; whereas Browning was, and remains, a minority cult, and the minority becomes steadily smaller.

In his case probably it is the obscurity that damns him; the precious metal of his thought is not worth the trouble of extracting it from the mass of base ore. In Shakespeare the position is reversed; the thought is seldom profound, as it is Æschylus or Sophocles or Hardy (but after all, the drama is concerned with human beings, who seldom think profoundly); but the expression is so perfect that a mere commonplace passes for the pearl of great price. Shakespeare satisfies us in everything except his plots, which are often as childish as some of Dickens' construction, but he is not above passing off brilliants for diamonds—and the trouble is that his brilliants are frequently more attractive than other men's diamonds.

As between Dryden and Shakespeare the verdict is easy. Both were journeymen—dramatists. Both did a good deal of hack-work for a living. Neither was above a bit of jerry-building, any more than (in spite of Ruskin) the men who built the cathedrals and the Vatican. But whereas Shakespeare bettered what he stole, and sometimes immortalised rubbish, Dryden merely made a job of it, and not quite the best job. (Compare his "Tempest" with Shakespeare's). Shakespeare was far above his contemporary dramatists in spirit, style, wit; manner and matter; Dryden was hardly equal to Wycherley, and distinctly below Congreve and Vanbrugh, his successors. Their wit, like Sheridan's, has stayed the course, but all the strength and grace of rugged John went into his verse, and the verse alone has survived.

A. WYATT TILBY.

AN OMNIBUS REVIEW OF FIVE TRAVEL BOOKS

THE author of the first of these books (*Under Seven Congo Kings* by R. H. Carson Graham, Carey Press, 6/-), was one of a number of pioneer missionaries who proved themselves in will and intention (sometimes, alas, in fact) to be Christian martyrs. The story, modestly and dispassionately related, focusses our attention upon a history of human courage and hardship which is concerned as much with the establishment of civilisation as with the propagation of religion in barbaric Congo land. Perhaps because of its extraordinarily dumb appeal, readers of this story will find their sympathies almost press-ganged into service; if so, such sympathies should not be suppressed. *Growing Up in New Guinea*, by Margaret Mead (Routledge, 12/6) is a Comparative Study of Primitive Education by the author of that Sociological achievement, "Coming Of Age in Samoa." In her last book, Dr. Mead tells of an isolated community on the Island of Manus untouched by missionaries or foreign trade, and of how she studied the undisciplined childhood that precedes, as a training, the rigid social code to which the Manus native must eventually conform. In the second part of the book, the authoress considers the larger aspects of educational and emotional problems in the "civilised" world of to-day. Her thoughtful and provocative comments throw much new light upon many complicated and vital problems of modern life. In a foreword by Viscount Allenby, we are introduced to *Parergon* (Dent 10/6). Captain John Yardley, the author and one of the officers taking part in the long expedition, tells the story of how, when the Great War was drawing to its close

and British prestige and authority was being challenged on our remotest frontiers of Equatorial Africa, the Foreign and Colonial Offices had to assume the role of military protectors of those infinitely inaccessible outposts of Empire. As Viscount Allenby writes of it, "the narrative of the campaign against the Turkana and the Abyssinian raiders is thrilling to read. The author is a master of clear narrative and a shrewd commentator. . . . Much thought has gone to the writing of this book and it is a valuable contribution to the Empire's literature." Photographic illustrations contribute to the atmosphere of the story which has been written with sympathy and a sense of humour. Remembered as the famous though anonymous author of "The Lost Dominion," Al Carhill's new book, *Madampur* (Blackwood, 15/-), will interest his old readers. He recalls "the experiences and observations of a very subordinate District Officer in the district here called Madampur," which, considering his thorough experience of India and his wide vision of Imperial affairs, command thoughtful and serious attention. As an author, Mr. Carhill has been good enough craftsman to realise that the title and contents of his book require an interest to pin them firmly in front of his readers, and so he has wisely chosen to give his narrative a personal touch all the way through which fastens it firmly to its reader's attention and interest. Enthusiasm fires his statements and justice tempers his sentiments—two qualities which invariably stand sentinel to the book of this kind that is worth reading. *The Temple of The Warriors*, by Earl H. Morris, (Scribners, 21/-), unfolds for the armchair reader the drama of the discovery, excavation and repair of the Yucatan Temple which was one of the most magnificent examples of aboriginal American architecture. When Morris completed his excavations in 1928, the blood of human sacrifice had not dripped from the Temple's altar for five hundred years, and the straightforward and exciting narrative of its gradual emergence from the dust of centuries takes the reader, step by step, from the day the axe first rings in the undergrowth on that mysterious mound at the moment when restorations of the treasures unearthed was completed. If romance requires achievement to perfect it, it is here in all its glory.

M.E.P.-G.

TENNYSON'S UNPUBLISHED POEMS

"*Unpublished Early Poems.*" By Alfred Tennyson. Edited by Charles Tennyson. Macmillan. 10s. 6d. net.

IT was left to Mr. Tennyson's discretion to decide whether these poems, which were never published by his grandfather, nor with one exception, by his father, should be allowed to see the light. He has decided on publication, and rightly so. He would have been justified if it were merely on the ground that they throw some light on Alfred Tennyson's early youth and the growth of his poetic talent. But more than that, most of them have considerable intrinsic merit, and though it would be absurd to say that they can enhance his reputation, they may at least play their part in sustaining it.

For the early work of a poet is always peculiarly interesting. It is apt, of course, to be imitative; but, even then, it shows us what authors cast their spell on him. But where it is not imitative, his natural powers are likely to be revealed before they have been modified by conscious culture and technique. It was for this reason that Coleridge, seeking to discuss the "qualities in a poem, which may be deemed promises and specific symptoms of poetic power," turned, in the case of Shakespeare, to his earliest known works—"works which give at once strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity of his genius."

To examine these poems from this point of view may prove, I think, to be worth while. For the early verses which were published during his life-time had either been

revised by Tennyson himself when he was no longer very young, or were selected because they commended themselves to his more mature taste. Not so with the poems in this volume. Some of them are unrevised. Some may perhaps be regarded as "studies" for poems or parts of poems which were never written. Others have served as literary raw material—records of impressions, some happy phrases of which may be deemed fit to survive in another later setting. Thus his grandson reminds us of the lines in "In Memoriam":

A breeze began to tremble o'er
The large leaves of the sycamore
which are clearly taken from verses written when he was at Cambridge:

Brothers, come! the twilight's tears
Are heavy on the barley spears,
And the sweet winds tremble o'er
The large leaves of the sycamore.

The most significant passages in this volume are to be found in Parts I and II, the first containing poems of his boyhood, the second poems written when he was an undergraduate at Cambridge. The former reveal not only his precocity—they certainly show that—but that the Tennyson of the earliest creative period was not quite that Tennyson who appears in his familiar work. His defects are not the defects of a later age. There are no signs of that prettiness, that excess of tunefulness, that cloying sweetness of sentiment which, all too evident in some of his poems, have given an excuse to the anti-Victorians of to-day for their prejudice against all of his work. We find at this stage that he is steeped in the Elizabethans, in Milton, in Pope (of the *Iliad*), in Crashaw, and that with his keen imagination and sensitive ear he picks up and with some eloquence echoes the Miltonic rhythms and vehement vowel sounds. To the influence of both Milton and Pope we may ascribe the extraordinary versification in his translation from Claudian's "Proserpine," written before he was fourteen. Still more remarkable is "Armageddon," produced when he was probably fifteen. Here is a passage from it:

I look'd,
And lo! the vision of the night was chang'd
The sooty mantle of infernal smoke
Whose blank, obliterating, dewless cloud
Had made the plain like some vast crater, rose
Distinct from Earth and gather'd to itself
In one dense, dry, interminable mass
Sailing far Northward, as it were the shadow
Of this round Planet cast upon the face
Of the bleak air. But this was wonderful,
To see how full it was of living things,
Strange shapings, and anomalies of Hell,
And dusky faces, and protruded arms
Of hairy strength, and white and garish eyes,
And silent interwisted thunderbolts,
Wreathing and sparkling restlessly like snakes
Within their grassy depths.

In several of these early poems, and especially in "Perdidi Diem," where we find such lines as

Our Planets, slumbering in their swiftness, hear
The last beat of the thunder of God's heart . . .

we feel that we have a young poet who might be shaping in the direction, say, of Francis Thompson, rather than of Alfred, Lord Tennyson. We can easily understand that the boy who wrote such lines was to become a great poet, but not just that poet who, in fact, impressed himself in the Tennysonian way on the Victorian mind.

And then we come to the transition stage at Cambridge, where he found himself a member of a group of young men—a group like that defined by Sainte Beuve as a "natural and spontaneous association of young minds and young talents, not exactly similar and of the same family, but of the same flight and the same spring, hatched under the same star." They inherited the romanticist tradition. But like all young poets, they would not be content to leave their technique where they found it. They were experimenting freely with metre. If Coleridge and Wordsworth could add vivacity to poetry by substituting for the monotonous syllabic metre of the classicists a variety of equivalent feet, Tennyson could go one better.

In the Elegiac which begins:

Over an old gate leaning i' th' mellow time of the gleaming
Pleasant it was to hark unto the merry woodlark
and in lines illustrating his fondness for Oxymoron, as
Such ideal unideal,
Such uncommon commonplace!

we have early exaggerated examples of the style which was to become Tennysonian. If we study this volume carefully we may see the early indications, first, of a poet of any time or generation, and secondly, of a poet of the Victorian era. It might be an instructive study, helping us to distinguish between that element in Tennyson against which, as Georgians, we react, and that element in him which the world will continue to admire because he is, when the worst has been said, a great poet.

The reasons given by the Editor for identifying the verses on page 56 as Tennyson's are not altogether convincing. But the Notes in general give us primarily the information and the suggestions we should wish for. The short Preface is a model of Editorial comment.

R. A. SCOTT-JAMES.

NEW LIFE OF DEFOE

The Life of Daniel Defoe. By Thomas Wright. Farncombe & Sons. 21s.

MR. THOMAS WRIGHT, the veteran biographer, has taken advantage of the bicentenary of the death of Daniel Defoe to recast the Life that he issued in 1894 and to incorporate the results of recent researches. This handsome volume, with its generous illustrations, can fairly be regarded as a new book, and it is a pity that Defoe should be so lost in his writings that little beyond his publications is known of him. Mr. Wright gives a table of fresh information, and for the rest falls back upon the familiar belief that the story of Robinson Crusoe is allegorical, that, for example, the other side of the island refers to Scotland, and so forth. Defoe himself made elusive references to his tours, experiences and his travels. On these, interesting conjectures can be based, but we employed them only because no trustworthy facts are obtainable. By the useful and ingenious plan of devoting part of each section of this biography to the pamphlets and writings published in each year, the story is eked out; but it must be admitted that no adequate biography is possible. On the other hand, the present book does give us a better acquaintance with Defoe's innumerable writings which we should not otherwise have, for few people would be tempted to read the two hundred and fifty publications if it were not for the hope of gleanings something further about their author. The incorrigible pamphleteer had, however, the journalist's gift for allusion and never lost a chance of claiming special familiarity with places or conditions, and to know with what he was occupied is to lift a corner of the veil behind which this sport of fortune was accustomed to hide himself. Mr. Wright does this part of his work very well. He makes us feel that he has sifted every corner for information. It is only when he presses the allegory or is inclined to accept works the authenticity of which has been disputed that we read him with some reservation. Our real knowledge may be presented under a microscope, but there is no sensation of padding.

The new matter of chief importance is Defoe's letter to Godolphin, but there is still much to conjecture concerning the secret service in which Defoe was engaged under different governments, and it is remarkable that the man who described to the life the adventures of Crusoe upon a remote island should have lived such a mysterious existence at home and covered most of his tracks so successfully. His prodigious activity with his pen, aided perhaps by the confidant who may have suggested the man Friday to the novelist, makes him the founder of journalism whom no pursuing creditors or political enemies could silence. If Mr. Wright is correct, it was Defoe's sister, Mrs. Maxwell, who provided him with a secret asylum, and from the date of his first imprisonment in 1703 it would seem that he was cut off from overt employment to remain a suspected person in

the eyes of the world. For all interested in the man, however, and for those who wish to have a bird's eye view of his innumerable pamphlets, Mr. Wright's new book will be an indispensable quarry. His abilities were such, both for practical affairs and for controversial and descriptive writings, that he seems lamed by misfortune and to have passed from extremity of comfort to bankruptcy when he seemed designed for security, industry and quiet. The odd streak of mysticism is another incongruity in his character, and Mr. Wright's mosaic collects the fragments which suggest but cannot form a complete record of his life.

OSBERT BURDETT.

AN HONEST BOOK

"The Revelance of Christianity." By F. R. Barry. Nisbet & Co. 10s. 6d.

MR. BARRY, Vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, and Fellow and Tutor of Balliol, is best known to the public as the genius who, after the war, attempted to cure the debility of the Church of England by a blood-transfusion. In the Knutsford Test School he gathered together hundreds of young ex-Service men with a view to turning them into a new sort of parson. But the apocalyptic dawn of Knutsford faded into the light of common day. All these young men (as as many of them as persevered) are now conventional clergymen; and the Church continues as before.

The book before us is the fruit of ten years' post-war meditation. The author, such is his spiritual toughness, still remains an optimist, but his book is almost as great a challenge to the Church of to-day as was "Dick" Sheppard's "Impatience of a Parson." He is impatient with the current shirking and shelving of intellectual problems; and with the wholesale pre-occupation with finance and organization. He sees that the Prayer Book fiasco was the natural result of an attempt to treat revision as an administrative question only, and not a question of doctrine. And he is no less clear that "the exhausting busyness which is the bane of the Church at this moment, and that quite disproportionate concern with the speeding up of the institutional mechanism" are both alike "compensations" which the clerical mind has utilised to enable it to evade the really pressing problems. While busy with his card-index, the ecclesiastical administrator can forget that the ground is no longer solid under his feet.

Mr. Barry is outspoken on the marriage and contraception issues. He rightly observes that on these topics "not every utterance of bachelor clerics, safe in harbour beyond the age of passion, is necessarily to be accepted as oracular." Such utterances, which are too common, are indeed both ignorant and ludicrous. He reminds us that "the first interest of Christian ethics is not to prevent people from getting unmarried," as one might imagine to be the case from the pronouncements of prominent clergy and the so-called religious Press. "We are never going to Christianize marriage by opposing demands for a change in the divorce laws. The laws as they stand are impossible to justify." In this matter, as he says, the battle tactics of the Church Militant suggest incompetent generalship. As for the limitation of families, "to say that it is 'unnatural' says nothing. Everything in civilized life depends on conscious control of natural processes." Nature's method is a sixty per cent. infant mortality; or, alternatively, famine, pestilence, and war. But some Anglican and Roman clergy have the mentality of people who advocate *suttee* (This is our own comment, not Mr. Barry's).

One can only hope that the devout laity, the parochial clergy, and the bishops, will read this book. One may suspect that the bishops, who with certain notable exceptions are a liberal and intelligent body of men, will agree, tacitly, with most of it. The rank and file of the clergy will agree with rather less, and the devout laity, who are the Church's chief handicap, will agree with none of it. But nevertheless it is a good book.

J. C. HARDWICK.

HUGH THOMPSON

Hugh Thomson. His Art, His Letters. His Humour and Charm. By M. H. Spielmann and Walter Jerrold. A. & C. Black. 25s.

THIS book, full of delightful examples of Hugh Thomson's drawings, has for some years been a labour of love to his old friend Mr. Spielmann, who planned it and began it with the late Walter Jerrold. The artist's work is better known than his life, for he shrank from the limelight, and he is revealed here as an endearing personality, a man who did not put a high enough value on himself. He was full of doubts and torments as to the quality of his work, due chiefly to the fact that he had no grounding in his early life. What little teaching he got was from John Vinycomb, a designer in a firm of colour printers for whom he worked as a lad. What Thomson did not realise, though early in his career it was fortunately perceived by Joseph Comyns Carr, was that his keen memory and amazing powers of observation filled most of the gaps in his training. And no doubt it is due to Carr's practical encouragement that some of the most characteristic of Thomson's work was done when he was at his best, and before a lingering malady sapped his strength, and the poverty of the war period robbed him of opportunity.

His rendering of the Eighteenth Century, and early Nineteenth, enriched some of our classics, and his illustrations to such books as Cranford, the Vicar of Wakefield, Pride and Prejudice, and to the Sir Roger de Coverley, and Coaching Days volumes, are and will be prized. Not only is he at ease in portraying men and women of every rank, and horses and dogs, but he marries a dainty charm and distinction to a sense of humour. This book will make a fresh appeal to the artist's old admirers, and gain him many more. As to the man himself, the simple story of his life, as it is unfolded, shows that he was, in Mr. Spielmann's words, "a man of strong character and high principle, delicate in his happy humour and gentle in his kindness, and withal in heart and in demeanour modest."

SHORTER NOTICES

SPAIN WITHOUT TEARS

Letters From Spain. By Karel Capek. Geoffrey Bles. 5s.

DR. CAPEK showed, in his "Letters From England," his quality as a shrewd interpreter and as an entertaining companion. In the present volume he discourses with a like humour and insight about Spain. In his own whimsical and illuminating manner he surveys cities and buildings, flowers and vegetation, pictures, women, dress, foods and wines, and of course bull-fights. Whatever his subject, be it architecture or geology, Goya, or Moorish art or flamencos, Dr. Capek seems to be equally at home. His impressions have the freshness due to novelty, and at the same time are coloured by the affection which is engendered by long familiarity—an affection which may mount to enthusiasm but which is never uncontrolled. And the author of "R.U.R." and other satirical work retains an unsoured zest in strange sights and colours and in national differences of language and custom and food.

Dr. Capek's gifts of expression are seen at their best in his brilliant descriptions of bull-fighting, the heroic aspect of which is set beside its horrors; and his charming wit sparkles in his account of a train collision, his comments on the International Suit-case, and in other passages which invite quotation. The author's drawings are a delight in themselves for their acute observation and humorous fancy. The translation, by Mr. Paul Selver, is as usual all that could be desired.

The Literary Mind. By Max Eastman.
Scribners. 10s. 6d.

THERE is a certain school of self-styled "modern" writers and poets who pursue what Mr. Eastman not unjustly describes as the cult of unintelligibility. As an example he quotes this passage from Gertrude Stein: "Any space is not quiet it is so likely to be shiny. Darkness very darkness is sectional. There is a way to see in onion and surely very surely rhubarb and a tomato, surely very surely there is that seeding." Upon this pseudo-modernism the writer launches a virulent attack. His argument is that this movement is, in its essence only a grandiose effort of the literary mind to resist the advance of science, which is more and more is supplanting the emotional guess-work that, once considered valid statement, formed the basis of the literary mind: "Abandoning all pretence to understand or interpret life, the poets are taking refuge in pure poetry and unintelligibility." The argument is well worked out, although owing to the fact that many of the essay-chapters are virtually independent of one another, there is a certain amount of repetition which makes reading rather heavy going in places. Nevertheless, the volume is commendably stimulating and not devoid of humour.

A Window in Fleet Street. By James Milne.
Murray. 12s.

IN this volume Mr. Milne has jotted down memories of London journalism dating from the early 'nineties. For the most part, they concern persons of more or less celebrity whom he met in the course of daily work. Sometimes he interviewed them; sometimes he merely saw them. Parnell, Joseph Chamberlain, Booth, Spurgeon, Mrs. Maybrick, and Queen Victoria are of the company. Rather too often, the personal reminiscence has been trivial, and a considerable amount of padding has been required to make it fill the allotted space. Probably, the book would be livelier and contain more real meat if its author had devoted more chapters to stories and sketches of his colleagues. How well he can write of men with whom he was in close and frequent touch is proved by his short though admirable study of W. H. Massingham. And, after all, when we are asked to look out of a Fleet Street window, we have a right to asked that Fleet Street shall be shown in the foreground.

Colonial Admiralty Jurisdiction in the Seventeenth Century. By Helen J. Crump.
Longmans. 9s.

THIS admirable monograph on Colonial Admiralty Jurisdiction in the Seventeenth Century is one of a series of Imperial studies prepared under the auspices of the Royal Empire Society, and it was approved as a Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of London. Dr. Helen Crump explains briefly how the courts of Admiralty arose to deal with piracy prizes, and other matters affecting the King's justice or the King's revenue on the high-seas or in the English ports, and how, after the foundation of the Empire in America and the East, Admiralty Courts sprang up, of necessity, in the British Dominions overseas, and on the littoral controlled by the East India Company. Dr. Crump gives us an exceptional well-documented story of the working of these Kings Courts, and of the jealousy and active opposition they met with at the hands of Colonies which, welcoming the protection of the Crown, resented its interference in their domestic affairs. It would seem indeed that, for all their necessity, these Courts were a source of irritation out of all proportion to their value to the Colonies; though, when they worked, they were no doubt useful to the mother country.

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L. C. Smith & Corona Typewriters, Ltd.,
Melbourne House, Aldwych, W.C.2.

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S.R.1.

ACROSTIC—No. 512

(Closing Date: First Post, Thursday, January 28).

"GILDING REFINED GOLD!" MIGHT SHAKESPEARE MUTTER
AT SEEING US SPREAD THESE ON PRIME FRESH BUTTER.

1. Tight skins, knobbed sticks, produce that stirring sound.
2. Conditioned by our planet's yearly round.
3. In Spanish-speaking lands protects the head.
4. Her dulcet strains would well-nigh wake the dead.
5. Hugest of rats—abounds in Ceylon's isle.
6. And this he is. (The thought makes coolies smile).
7. Not far from Bingen-on-the-Rhine I'm grown.
8. 'Tis fit that each one should, what each has sown.
9. Clip at both ends a local regulation.
10. Sheep guards this daughter of an Eastern nation.
11. By agile feats my daily bread I gain.
12. How many a serpent have my sharp teeth slain!

SOLUTION OF ACROSTIC No. 510

M ollus C
Inchmeal¹
D ing O²
N un
I chabo D³
G ilga L⁴
Hirsut E⁵
T ootsies S
Hesperus⁶
O rder S
dU c K
R osemar Y

1. The King-cobra (Hamadryad) eats other snakes.
2. The Australian wild dog.
3. 1 Sam. iv., 21.
4. 1 Sam. xv., 33.
5. Gen. xxvii., 11.
6. Byron.

Acrostic No. 510.—The winner is the Rev. Charles G. Box, 20, High Street, Daventry, who has selected as his prize "Diary of a Scotch Gardener," by Thomas Blaikie, published by Routledge and reviewed by us on January 9 under the title "Glimpses of the Past." Thirteen other competitors chose this book, fourteen named "Animal Ways," seven "Magnolia Street," &c., &c.

Also correct:—Lilian, Madge.

One Light wrong:—A.E., Ali, Alphin, Ape, Barberry, Bobs, Mrs. Rosa H. Boothroyd, Boskerris, Mrs. Robt. Brown, Carlton, Miss Carter, Evelyn, E. J. Fincham, Cyril E. Ford, Fossil, Gay, Hardwick, T. Hartland, Junius, George W. Miller, Mrs. Milne, Lady Mottram, N. O. Sellam, Penelope, Peter, F. M. Petty, Mrs. Ritchie, Shorwell, Shrub, Sisypheus, St. Ives, Stucco, Taddo, Term, Tyro, Capt. W. R. Wolseley.

Two Lights wrong:—E. Barrett, Bimbo, Bertram R. Carter, C.C.J., Mrs. Curry, Estela, Miss E. Hearnden, Iago, Miss Kelly, Martha, A. M. W. Maxwell, Mrs. M. H. Scott, H. M. Vaughan, Mrs. Violet G. Wilson. All others more.

Light 9 baffled 49 solvers; Light 2, 14; Light 1, 7; Light 7, 2; Light 10, 1.

Acrostic No. 509.—One Light wrong: St. Ives.

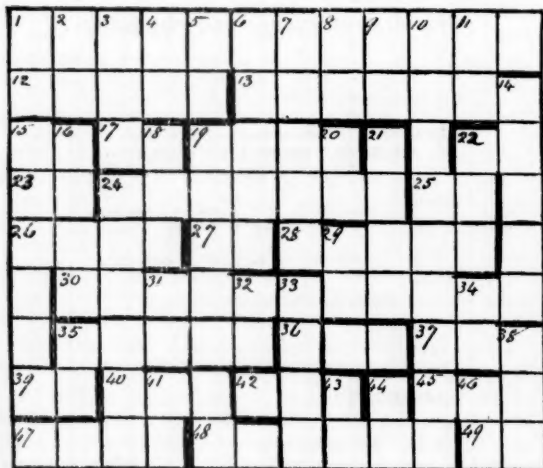
T. Hartland.—The matter shall be looked into at once.

Mrs. Ritchie.—*Sardanapalus* was not accepted, because I could not regard him as *emperor*, but only as *king of Assyria*.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE No. XLV.

By MORO

All words and clues are taken from four popular works of Lewis Carroll, whose centenary is celebrated on Wednesday next.



CLUES.

Across

1. How the gardener got up at five.
12. There seemed to be none of these at the croquet party.
13. The soup of the this was beautiful.
15. See 23. 17. See 8, and 47.
19. Alice noticed one in a tree.
22. Half of what Father Badger promised to his sons.
23. Used for trimming lobster's belt before 15 rev.
24. It this as it came whiffling.
- 25 and 27. Grass-plot round a sun-dial reversed.
26. You may seek what is handy for striking a light with me.
28. "A nice knock-down argument."
30. The crocodile went struggling along like a me.
35. Bruno used me as a yardstick. 36. See 18.
37. "How (this with nothing in it) the little crocodile".
39. Half the originator of the 40, 42 race.
- 40 and 42. See last. 45. See 38.
47. Lithe and slimy after 17 rev.
48. You might as well try to stop a Bandersnatch as me.
- 49 rev.: What the archbishop found.

Down

1. 35 this the crocodile's toof out. 2. = 31
3. The three little sisters were very this.
- 4 rev.: and 5. Alice denied that she was looking for us.
6. Seven jogged five's, consequently it's muddled here.
- 7 rev.: Alice put this on whilst talking.
8. 17 follows to make an ingredient of marine boots.
9. Head and tail of 33. 11. = 29
10. Bruno decorated Sylvie's garden for this.
- 14 rev.: The Chancellor put me in instead of Bruno.
16. Charm for a peculiar creature.
18. Do this with hope after 36.
- 19 rev.: Alice said this was not a bird.
20. Head and tail of 10.
- 21 rev.: After the game all the players but three were in this after 42.
22. Term of endearment used by Vice-warden to his wife, after 34 rev.
24. I flew open after the Queen screamed.
29. = 11. 31. = 2. 32. See 35d.
33. If warranted genuine it always looks grave at this (two words).
34. See 22.
35. Humpty Dumpty thought I was from home before 32.
38. Messenger in Anglo-Saxon attitude before 45.
41. How the Baker vanished after 27.
- 43 and 44. The youth made this rhyme with "do it."
46. The latter half of a sort of green pig turned round.
- P.S. Give Guy thy rice for the unchecked letters.

SOLUTION AND RESULT OF CROSSWORD No. XLIV.

Across.—Alcohol, Echo, Nauropo, Sil, Og, Droso, Audio, Pycno, Sum, Nal, Enud, Campion, Danak, Batho, Microchro, Holo, Appeared.

Down.—Ann, Pedo, La, Dynamo, Curcu, Il, Rondac, Ha, Sock, Ra, Opos, Acop, Lo, Aum, Be, Sum, Pa, He, Eid, Lira, Clino, Hor, Hoo, An, One, Geloto.

NOTES

Across.—12, Silo and Silage. 13, Deut. iii., 11. 19, Muss 21, Annual. 23, See "The Moonstone" (W. Collis). 24, Plant of same family. 27, Danakil. 37, M.A. about N. IV.2.

Down.—1, Ann = "grace." 3, Curculio. 9, Burns, "On Creech the Bookseller." 11, Rondache. 16, Milton's "L'Allegro," 1.132. 17, Aumil. 26, Para. 28, Bliss Carman. 29, Hamlet, III. 2. 30, I. Henry IV., II. 1.

The winner is R. Carrick, Felmersham, Bude, Cornwall, who has chosen for his/her prize "Diary of a Scotch Gardener" by Thomas Blaikie. Routledge. 10s. 6d.

LITERARY COMPETITION LXIV.

PROPHECY FOR 1932 IN THE MANNER OF OLD MOORE.

JUDGE'S REPORT.

The entries for our competition in which readers were invited to submit a Prophecy for 1932 in the manner of Old Moore were disappointing. Those who produced the most plausible imitations were usually singularly lacking in humour; and the attempts which displayed art and originality more often than not showed small approach to the original. Bridget, Chauve-Souris and Bogey were, however, both original and amusing, as were also Lampsilon and Seer. But tradition and originality were best wedded in the pastiches of Old Trident and Poohsman, and the Judge has no hesitation in awarding them the two prizes of a guinea each. Lack of space unfortunately prevents the publication of their essays.

TRAVEL

ABROAD BUT BRITISH

THERE must be many people in England to-day who under normal conditions would be preparing to "winter abroad." For years they have made it a rule, when fog and frost have given warning of the climate to be expected, to follow the swallows. Adverse exchange or a patriotic desire to benefit their country has made our annual flitters say good-bye to all that, and stay disconsolately at home, and maybe pretend that Bournemouth is Nice, Eastbourne Monte Carlo, or Weymouth Cairo. They despair too easily; there is another way.

Without putting a pound in the pocket of the foreigner, without once leaving the shelter of the Union Jack, they can have all the blue sky and all the sun they need, and that too with air purer than that which blows over any continent. For does not a British ship, wherever it sails, remain a bit of the homeland, where the pound remains the pound, and does not need to be translated, losing much in the translation, into some un-English decimal coinage represented by greasy and insanitary notes? Ship, one says, but floating hotel, club, and ocean-promenade, more nearly describes what a modern liner provides for its guests. What then, more agreeable to those in search of light and warmth, than an ocean cruise, with its freedom from all the petty inconveniences of travel and its complete change of atmosphere in every sense of the word.

Where can one go? There is no limit but the cost, and the cost can be calculated beforehand to a shilling. There is the Mediterranean, and all the Mediterranean stands for; and beyond, the Cape and Ceylon, and the latter is at its best in the Winter months. Or there is South America, with the Amazon, and a voyage almost of exploration, through the great forests to ports a thousand miles inland. Or the West Indies with all their charms of scenery and association. Chasing the sun is a simple business.

Then there is the life of the ship. On the great liners to-day every taste is cultivated and, short of a golf course, there is little in the way of games and exercise that is not at hand. Full size tennis-courts, squash racquets courts, swimming pools and decks for sun bathing. And in addition all the old shipboard games. Ball-rooms, and lounges, and smoking rooms, and meals served as only the best hotels serve them.

And in these floating palaces you can, if you will, go round the world on a circular tour such as Captain Cook could not have dreamed, Near East and Far East, the South Seas and their islands, Frisco and Panama and the Gulf, New York and home again; so if "oh to be in England now that April's there," be your desire, it will be fulfilled. And the winter of your discontent, with a little luck, will be over and done, and even at the worst the London Season will be on its way. There is enrichment of the mind as well as of the body in such a voyage; thereafter you will hold the East in fee, and memory will lighten the casual talk of dinner tables. "When I was in Honolulu," will conjure visions, and "Los Angeles" or "Colombo" will be no longer merely names.

The cost? Well, it will be little enough for what you receive. For it is an all-in cost, once the calculation is made; and for those who cannot afford time or money for the grand tour, there is still the Mediterranean, once the only sea that Europe knew. But long or short, in European or other waters, there will be value for every pound that is spent. In health, in comfort, in luxury, in rest and recreation the profits will accrue, and always the British ship and the flag, to satisfy you that you are following the slogan of the moment "Buy British!" Of all things British, what is more British than a British ship?

FOR £30

Look what it means!

For a saving out of income representing a weekly deposit of 11/6—(after allowing for the Government's contribution by means of a rebate of Income Tax), a man or woman during the period when EARNING POWER is greatest can make certain of receiving an income during the years of RETIREMENT, and provide an immediate estate for the PROTECTION of dependants.

Absolute Security

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guaranteed in cash, plus liberal bonuses, paid free of tax in middle life, or

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a year for life.

This Contract is Guaranteed by one of the world's leading Financial Institutions.

Sun Life of Canada

Assets :

£120,000,000

POST NOW

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Deposits will cease at the pre-arranged time, and then the assured may draw £1,000 plus liberal bonuses, with which to do so many things hitherto only dreamed of. On the other hand, if a private income for life is preferred, the sum may be left with the Company, which, assuming the continuation of the present bonus rate, will provide, in the case of a man, an income of £150 as long as you live.

The amounts receivable under this plan far exceed the total deposits made, and represents an investment at a substantial rate of interest, which always appreciates, and NEVER DEPRECIATES.

The deposits are in proportion to the size of policy and age of applicant; they can be large or small, to suit all circumstances, and benefits vary accordingly. The figures above are for a man aged 30. Send for figures to suit your own age and requirements.

NO OBLIGATION IS INCURRED

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(Mr. Mrs., or Miss)

Address

Occupation

Exact date of Birth.....

S.R. 25/1/32

The "Saturday Review" Suggests This Week:

[We hope that this page will keep our readers in touch with the best of the Theatre, Films, and Wireless programmes, and the books which in our opinion are the best of the week.—Ed.]

THEATRES

GILBERT WAKEFIELD'S LIST

- HAYMARKET.** *Can the Leopard . . . ?* by Ronald Jeans. (Whitehall 9832.) 8.30. Wed. and Sat. 2.30. Gertrude Lawrence and Ian Hunter in a very witty and well-acted comedy.
- STRAND.** *It's a Girl*, by Austin Melford. (Temple Bar 2660.) 8.30. Thurs. and Sat., 2.30. Leslie Henson and Sydney Howard in a farce similar to "It's a Boy."
- WESTMINSTER.** *The Anatomist*, by James Bridie. (Victoria 0283.) 8.30. Sat. 2.30. Henry Ainley in a sophisticated version of the crimes of Burke, Hare and Dr. Knox.
- GLOBE.** *And So To Bed*. By James B. Fagan. (Gerrard 8724.) 8.30. Wed. and Sat. 2.30. Yvonne Arnaud in a revival of Mr. Fagan's amusing play about Mr. and Mrs. Pepys and Charles II. Last performance January 30.
- AMBASSADORS.** *The Queen's Husband*. By Robert Sherwood. (Temple Bar 1171.) 8.30. Tues. and Sat. 2.30. An amusing comedy about life in a twentieth-century Ruritanian Royal Family.
- PHOENIX.** *Counsel's Opinion*. By Gilbert Wakefield. (Temple Bar 8611.) 8.30. Wed. and Sat. 2.30. Isabel Jeans, Owen Nares, Allan Aynesworth, Morton Selton.

BROADCASTING WIRELESS EDITOR'S LIST

NATIONAL

- Monday, January 25, 6.50 p.m. Miss V. Sackville-West will give her fortnightly talk on "New Books."
- 7.30 p.m. In his fourth talk in the series "How has Private Enterprise adapted Itself?" Professor Henry Clay will deal with Rationalization.
- 9.40 p.m. There will be a Chamber Music Concert. The Brosa String Quartet will play Quartets by van Dieren and Delius; and Sumner Austin (baritone), accompanied by the Quartet, will sing a group of songs by Peter Warlock.
- Tuesday, January 26, 8.30 p.m. Continuing his series of talks on "The Press" Mr. Kingsley Martin will talk about "What the Public Wants."
- Wednesday, January 27, 6.50 p.m. The fortnightly talk on "Coming Programmes" will be given by Mr. Adrian Boulton, Music Director of the B.B.C.
- 7.30 p.m. The fourth talk in the series called "Science and Civilisation" will be given by Mr. Hilaire Belloc.
- Thursday, January 28, 9.20 p.m. The Rt. Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare, Bt., G.B.E., C.M.G., LL.D., M.P., H.M. Secretary of State for Air, will talk about "India since the Round Table Conference."
- Friday, January 29, 6.50 p.m. The weekly talk on "The Week-end in the Garden" will be by Mr. C. H. Middleton, whose subject will be "The Hardy Flower Border."
- 7.30 p.m. Continuing his series "Modern Life and Modern Leisure" Dr. C. Delisle Burns will talk about "Machines for Entertainment."
- Saturday, January 30, 7.5 p.m. Mr. Gerald Heard will give his fortnightly talk on "This Surprising World."
- 9.20 p.m. There will be the fourth of the series of "Conversations in the Train" entitled "On the 9.20."
- Sunday, January 24, 5.30 p.m. Irene Scharrer will give a Pianoforte Recital of Chopin's music.
- LONDON REGIONAL**
- Sunday, January 24, 5 p.m. Professor John MacMurray will give the fifteenth talk in the series "The Modern Dilemma."

FILMS

MARK FORREST'S LIST

LONDON FILMS

- THE CAPITOL.** *Sunshine Susie*. This still continues. An amusing comedy with music. Renate Muller and Jack Hulbert.
- THE MARBLE ARCH PAVILION.** *Congress Dances*. This has moved again. Another good comedy with music. Lilian Harvey and Conrad Veidt.
- THE EMPIRE.** *The Rise of Helga*. For lovers of Greta Garbo.
- THE CARLTON.** *The Cheat*. Criticized in this issue.
- THE LEICESTER SQUARE.** *Frail Women*. Criticized in this issue.
- THE ACADEMY.** *West Front 1918*. Criticized in this issue.
- THE NEW GALLERY.** *Round the World in 80 minutes*. With the irrepressible Douglas Fairbanks.
- THE PLAZA.** *Service for Ladies*. An amusing trifle with Leslie Howard and Elizabeth Allan.

GENERAL RELEASES

- Dirigible*. Made with the aid of the American Naval Air Service. Very fine photography.
- The Secret Six*. A gangster picture above the average. Wallace Beery.

BOOKS TO READ

LITERARY EDITOR'S LIST

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. By Matthew Josephson. Gollancz. 18s.
- India and the British*. By Patricia Kendall. Scribners. 16s.
- The Passionate Pilgrim*. By G. M. Williams J. Hamilton. 18s.
- George Canning*. By Sir Charles Petrie, Bart. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 5s.
- Science To-day and To-morrow*. Morley College Lectures. Williams and Norgate. 4s.
- Labour's Future at Stake*. By Clifford Allen. Allen and Unwin. 2s. 6d.
- The Best One-Act Plays of 1931*. Selected by J. W. Marriott. Harrap. 5s.
- Cavalcade*. By Noel Coward. Heinemann. 5s.

NOVELS

- Even-Song*. By Beverley Nichols. Jonathan Cape. 7s. 6d.
- A Winter's Passion*. By D. L. Moore. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.
- Infamous Fame*. By E. Charles Vivian. Ward Lock and Co. 7s. 6d.
- Mulberry Square*. By Lida Larrimore. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

CITY

Lombard Street, Wednesday.

Sterling's recent rise is gratifying. Not that it is an unmixed blessing—it removes part of the advantage that the fall in sterling has conferred on our export trade. On the other hand, it refutes the suggestions current in some quarters abroad, and indeed at home, that the bottom had been knocked out of the British pound and that we were heading for a disastrous collapse in the value of our currency. My forecast of a rise in sterling in the earlier part of the year has been well fulfilled. The pound closed 1931 at 3.39 American dollars. Since then it has risen above 3.50 American dollars. Our latest overseas trade returns, although showing no substantial improvement, suggest at least that the corner has been turned. All things considered, we have reason for quiet confidence without exuberant optimism. The reparations discussions are taking some peculiar twists but these are largely due to the political exigencies of the countries concerned. On the side of delay it can almost certainly be said that the longer the nations have time to think the more evidence there will be that a thorough-going compromise will be in the best interests of all parties.

Balancing the Budget

There seems good reason to hope that one very important factor in the removal of the crisis—the balancing of the Budget—will be duly achieved, especially if the income-tax payer maintains his admirable rush to the collectors' offices. The spectacle of income-tax collectors being besieged by taxpayers is so striking a reversal in the usual manner in which the relations of the collector to the taxpayer are portrayed in the comic papers that the Continent in particular has become lost in admiration. We must not overlook the fact that every extra penny paid before March 31, especially as

(Continued on page 110.)

COMPANY MEETINGS

THE NATIONAL BUILDING SOCIETY

Founded 1849

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the above Society was held at Southern House on 15th January, 1932.

The Chairman, Mr. George Elkington, J.P., F.R.I.B.A., in moving the adoption of the Report and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st October, 1931, said:

"Two years ago I told you that among the 50 larger Building Societies in the United Kingdom we were in the first twelve. Now I am very proud to say we are the fourth."

In turning to the accounts the Chairman pointed out that the total assets were £17,217,579.

Subscriptions during the year amounted to £6,761,479.

Withdrawals were normal, totalling £2,337,263, which represents the same percentage to Members' Capital as the figures for the preceding year. Members' Capital at the end of the year stood at £15,661,706, being a nett increase for the year of £4,424,216.

Gross Revenue amounted to £955,086, and after providing for interest on Completed and Uncompleted Shares at 5 per cent. free of income tax (equal to £6 13s. 4d. per cent. where the full standard rate of tax is borne) an amount of £114,142 was appropriated to Reserves, this figure being £22,835 better than that of last year.

The Chairman went on to say that the very large amount of Mortgage Advances made during the year, showing an increase of £1,881,352 in relation to the preceding year's figures, had all been made to occupying owners after personal surveys and reports by the Directors. The average loan made during the year was approximately £700. Investments in Trustee Securities amounted to £911,886. A specific reserve is in existence to provide reasonable cover for any depreciation in these investments (the amount of this reserve having been increased to £50,884) although it is the fixed policy of the Board to retain these Stocks until maturity, when (with the exception of £50,000 Railway Debenture Stocks) they are all redeemable at par.

The Reserve Funds now total £552,026.

The Annual Reports and Accounts were adopted, and the retiring Directors and Auditors were re-elected.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried with acclamation.

MICHAEL NAIRN & GREENWICH

The tenth annual general meeting of Michael Nairn and Greenwich Ltd. was held on Monday at Winchester House, London, E.C.

Sir Michael Nairn, Bt. (the chairman) said that in view of the difficult trading conditions it was only to be expected that the trading results of their associated companies would be adversely affected. The profits of the Greenwich Inlaid Linoleum Co. were reduced as compared with those of the previous year, and a lower dividend has been paid, but the balance sheet of that company disclosed a strong financial position. However, when trade conditions revived, their modern works at Greenwich were well equipped to take the fullest advantage of the first signs of returning prosperity.

Their principal associated company, Michael Nairn and Co. had also had to face heavy weather in 1931, but had stood up to the storm successfully, and found themselves in the position to pay out of the earnings of their last financial year at a rate of dividend which enabled Michael Nairn and Greenwich to declare the same dividend as last year. He felt sure shareholders would regard that as an extremely gratifying result. The dividend declared by Michael Nairn and Co. had been decided upon after proper provision had been made by them for depreciation and various forms of reserves.

It was as difficult as ever to say anything definite about the future. The cloud of trade depression still hung over the world, and no country remained unaffected by its influence. It could not, however, last for ever, and, unfortunate as its effects had been, it was bringing home to many the much-needed lesson of the essential inter-dependence of the nations of the world. No nation could live to itself or long remain prosperous if other nations found themselves in financial and economic difficulties. It was not too much to hope that the realisation of that fact might eventually bring about an enlightened policy which would result in removing some of the obstacles, such as reparations and international war debts, which definitely stood in the way of progress and the trade revival of which the world stood in such urgent need.

From the accounts it would be seen that their income for the year, represented by dividends from investments, &c., amounted to £211,252, as compared with £219,223 last year. The board recommended a final dividend of 7½ per cent., making 12½ per cent., less income-tax, for the year, leaving to be carried forward £57,614, as compared with £58,609 last year.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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THE SECRETARY

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most of us are paying three-quarters instead of half-a-year's tax, means in a sense tapping the revenue of future years, but if ever there were a time when exceptional measures to balance the Budget were desirable it is the present. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that it is only the individual taxpayer's income-tax on the profits of his trade or profession that is affected by the new three-quarters rule. The income-tax payable by companies has already been due in one payment for the whole year on January 1, as also have been the Schedule "A" or property tax, and the individual's super-tax or surtax.

New Issue Success

The rapidity with which the Mauritius £600,000 loan, guaranteed by the British Government, was subscribed suggests that a little less temerity on the part of issuing houses would be a good thing. The Mauritius issue, consisting of 5 per cent. stock offered at 98½, is understood to have been subscribed four or five times over. That wise spending is better than miserly economy is just as true of capital expenditure by companies and governments as of personal expenditure by individuals. A flood of undesirable flotations is the last thing that the nation needs. That would merely accentuate its troubles, but wise capital expenditure adapted to the new trend of trade would be good policy and would, I

believe, be readily provided by the investor. Further enlightenment on the Government's fiscal policy is probably awaited in respect of a good many industrial propositions that are awaiting a favourable opening.

What is a Bank?

Out of 8,385 new companies registered at Somerset House last year, 96 are classified as "banks" in the useful analysis of Messrs. Jordan & Sons, the company registration agents. But what is a bank? As 83 of the 96 are "private" companies it is probable that a large number of them have taken powers to conduct banking business as a mere formality or, possibly, to lend an air of respectability. A company that does not include such powers in its memorandum of association can scarcely adopt, as some small concerns do, the high-sounding title of "merchant bankers," which rightly belongs to some of the most famous and substantial City concerns. The Companies Act imposes some slight extra provisions on companies that conduct banking business but anyone can set up as a "bank" with a mere handful of capital. Assurance companies must make a very substantial deposit with the State. No such safeguard is imposed on a man who presumes to establish a bank, or to conduct a bucket-shop business under the title of a bank. It is an anomaly of which the evils have been reduced by the greater enlightenment of the public in financial affairs.

BARCLAYS BANK LIMITED.

FREDERICK CRAUFURD GOODENOUGH, Esq., Chairman.
WILLIAM FAVILL TUKE, Esq., Vice-Chairman.
General Managers: E. Fisher, H. T. Mitchell, A. W. Tuke, N. S. Jones.
Foreign General Manager: W. O. Stevenson.

Statement of Accounts

December 31st, 1931.

		£	£
LIABILITIES.			
Current, Deposit and other Accounts, including Reserve for Income Tax and			
Contingencies and Balance of Profit and Loss	...	325,850,461	
Balances in Account with Subsidiary Banks	...	9,714,683	
			335,565,144
Acceptances and Endorsements, &c., for account of Customers	...		10,796,794
Paid-up Capital	...		15,858,217
Reserve Fund	...		10,250,000
ASSETS.			
Cash in hand, and with the Bank of England	...		47,271,696
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection	...		9,638,649
Money at Call and Short Notice	...		21,766,450
Bills Discounted	...		40,791,394
Investments at or below market price	...		56,564,015
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, less amounts written off):—			
The British Linen Bank—£1,238,119 Stock	...		3,714,357
Union Bank of Manchester Limited—300,000 Shares of £5 each, £2 10s. paid...			750,000
Other Subsidiary Banks—including fully paid Shares and 500,000 "B" Shares of £5 each, £1 per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and 1,000,000 Shares of £1 each, 5s. per share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France), Limited			
	...		2,229,588
Advances to Customers and other Accounts	...		172,197,631
Liability of Customers for Acceptances and Endorsements, &c.	...		10,796,794
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, less amounts written off)	...		6,749,581

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COMPANY MEETING

BARCLAYS BANK LTD.

Address of
Mr. F. C. GOODENOUGH

The Annual General Meeting of Barclays Bank was held on Thursday, January 21st, at Southern House (formerly known as Cannon Street Hotel), Cannon Street, London, E.C.

Mr. Frederick Craufurd Goodenough (Chairman) presided.

The Secretary (Mr. W. N. Seeley) read the notice convening the Meeting and the Auditors' Report.

The Chairman, before dealing with the Accounts, spoke of the great loss sustained by the Bank through the sudden death of Sir Herbert Hambling, Bt., the Deputy-Chairman, which took place on Tuesday last, the 19th inst. Proceeding, he referred to the election to the Board of Mr. William Henry Wiggin, D.S.O., and to the appointment during the year of two additional General Managers, Mr. Anthony William Tuke and Mr. Norman Shillingford Jones. The Chairman went on to say that the net profit for the year ended 31st December last amounted to £1,794,825, to which had to be added £559,363 brought forward, making a total sum to be dealt with of £2,354,188. After providing out of the profits of the year for all debts considered to be doubtful and not already provided for in previous years, they were enabled to make an addition of £200,000 to the Contingency Account, and, at the same time, to maintain their dividend. Taking the results of the year as a whole, he thought the Shareholders would feel that these had been very satisfactory, and they would have been even better but for the need of making large provision for doubtful Accounts. The Investments stood in the Balance Sheet at or below their market price on 31st December last, full provision for depreciation having been made out of the Investment Reserve Account, to which they had credited for many years past the profits realised on sales of Investments from time to time, as well as profits on maturing bonds as they were paid off. Shareholders would recollect that in 1925 and 1926 the Bank added substantial amounts to the Reserve Fund out of Investment Reserve Account.

GERMAN DEBTS.

Proceeding, the Chairman referred to the German debts in which the Bank, in common with other Banks all over the world, was interested. Barclays Bank held certain Treasury Bills issued by two of the States in Germany, where they had important banking connections. These Bills would certainly, in the Board's opinion, be paid, although the repayment would be delayed, owing to the difficulty of obtaining the necessary foreign exchange, which was one of the chief problems of the Reichsbank at the present time. In addition to these Bills, they had granted accommodation on ordinary banking lines to some of the leading German Banks and to a few private firms for trade purposes between the two countries.

FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES OF WORLD CRISIS.

Referring in general terms to the long series of catastrophic events in widely different parts of the world in the year under review, and showing, in brief outline, the many difficulties which had been encountered and dealt with, the Chairman observed that the immediate cause which brought about the chapter of disasters had been undoubtedly the fall in gold prices of commodities. The fundamental causes, however, were to be found in the problems of tariffs and the payment of War Debts and Reparations, which latter must soon be again considered at an International Conference. In this regard, there was good ground for hope, owing to the fact that there was now a much wider understanding and appreciation on the part of all Governments concerned of the issues which were involved, and this understanding had undoubtedly produced a much better feeling between them.

OVERSEAS INVESTMENT.

Alluding to the policy of overseas investment which this country has pursued and to the absence during the past two

years of such large sums as we were in the habit of investing for world development and new enterprise owing to the reduction in the income from invisible exports, the Chairman said it was to our own interests, as well as to those of the rest of the world, that we should rapidly regain the ability to make these investments overseas, which had been one of the greatest fertilising influences on the world's economic system as well as an important factor in building up our position as a great industrial nation.

A HOPEFUL OUTLOOK.

Referring, in conclusion, to certain of the factors relating to this country's internal affairs, the Chairman said there was now a greater realisation that it is essential to economise and to save wherever it is possible to do so, without unduly restricting public or private expenditure of a productive and profitable character. There had been a great cry regarding the disinclination to work, but he, himself, did not believe that much fault could be found in this respect. It had been the lack of opportunity which had prevented work being done. This lack of opportunity to work had been due, in part, to the failure of the resources for world development which this country used consistently to earn and to invest abroad, and which opened up fresh markets for industry and trade. It had also been due to the foreign tariffs, which, by some means or another, must be reduced in the interests of the whole world. The adverse effects of these foreign tariffs upon world trade were now making themselves increasingly felt and were being understood. If they could be reduced and if War Debts and Reparations could be dealt with, he felt that the two principal causes of the present depression would have been removed, and that we might then confidently look forward to a period of increasing prosperity. (Applause.)

The Report and Accounts were adopted and other formal business transacted.

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